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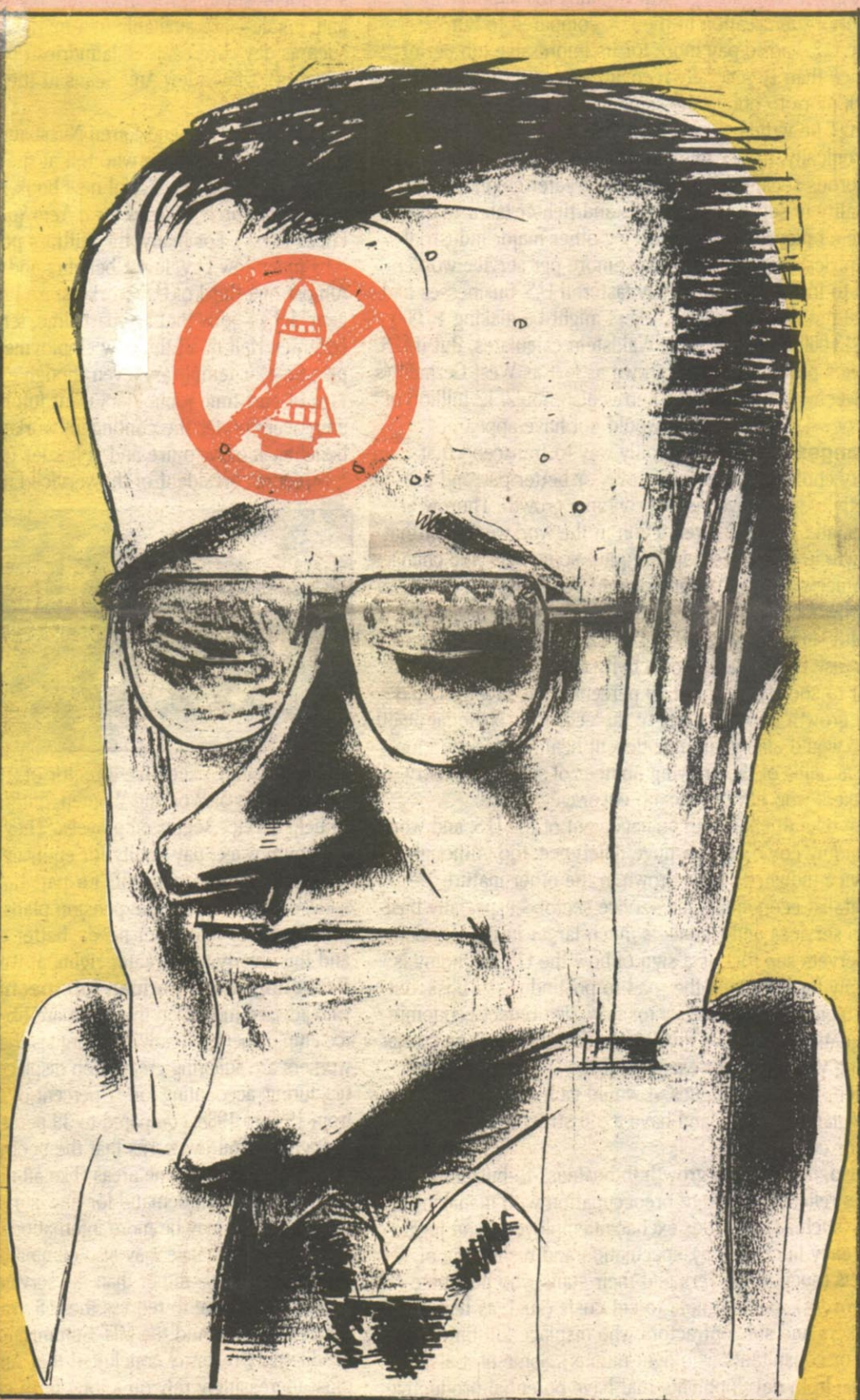
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DIANA JOHNSTONE
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HELP NEEDED

Service economy not serving U.S.

By David Moberg

Cheerleaders for the performance of the U.S. economy over the past two decades like to contrast the "great American job machine" with Western Europe's anemic creation of new jobs. But there are some dark linings to that silver cloud of economic joy.

Overwhelmingly the new U.S. jobs have been created in that amorphous blob referred to as the "service economy"—all employment not in manufacturing, agriculture, mining and construction. And from 1979 to 1986, 91 percent of all the service job growth took place in three areas: health care (17 percent), retail trade (29 percent) and producer—business to business—services (45 percent).

Although some of the jobs in health care and producer services are well paid, service employment in the largest job categories—such as food workers, clerks, janitors and nurses' aides—pays poorly.

But such low-wage service jobs are peculiar to the U.S., as pointed out by a pair of new studies—one by Lester Thurow, dean of the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the other by management consultant Louise Waldstein. The studies are published by the Economic Policy Institute, a liberal Washington think tank.

Low productivity, low wages: Service industry jobs do not have to be low paid. For example, "whereas private service workers in the U.S. are paid only 67 percent as much as those in manufacturing, in Japan they are paid 93 percent as much, and in Germany 85 percent as much

as manufacturing workers," Thurow writes.

Service industry employment, and therefore job growth generally, has boomed in the U.S. because productivity has dropped in producer, health and retail services, Thurow argues. The service sector share of the economy has grown, but employment has grown faster because each person is producing less. "Demand has been growing for services output," Thurow argues, "but falling or slow productivity growth is the real source of the observed rapid gains in employment."

Without strong countering forces, such as labor unions—which represent only 10 percent of the service sector—or an effective minimum wage law, real wages have remained low or dropped. U.S. businesses have a ready supply of cheap labor, due both to the baby boom flood of young workers and to the growth in numbers of working women. In another study released this past December, Harvard economist Richard Freeman contends that lower real wage growth explains the supposedly superior job creation in the U.S. compared to Europe. "The U.S. had to pay more for its impressive job performance than is generally recognized. Americans had to work more to obtain the same gains in their standard of living," he writes.

Ironically, higher minimum wages, strong unions, more generous social welfare systems, greater emphasis on equality in setting wage levels and tighter labor markets have all played a part in forcing other major industrial countries' employers to invest more per service worker and to increase productivity faster. If U.S. businesses had done the same, service workers might be making \$6,000 to \$13,000 more per year, Waldstein calculates. But if U.S. service productivity had grown as fast as West Germany's between 1972 and 1983, Thurow also notes, 12 million of the new U.S. service jobs would not have appeared.

Changes needed: The only way to transcend that nasty choice between more jobs or better pay and productivity is to have faster economic growth, Thurow argues, and possibly a reduction in the workweek. But that growth in many cases will require some systemic changes in American society. For example, replacing the country's patchwork, privatized medical system with a national health service on the model of Canada would greatly increase health care productivity and reduce the overall cost to society by about 20 percent. That savings could fuel growth in other parts of the economy. National health care would also guarantee decent health protection for the families of the growing number of service industry workers who have no health coverage.

An overall change in management of the U.S. and world economy could make a huge difference, too. Although service industries have grown in the other mature capitalist economies, the service sector—especially business services and trade—is much larger in the U.S. Some observers see that as a sign of how the U.S. economy is simply further along the road to postindustrial bliss. But the bigger U.S. service sector may also reflect economic stagnation, excessive financial speculation and manufacturing weakness. For example, if the U.S. had no trade deficit, Waldstein argues, it would gain about 3 million manufacturing jobs and have a job structure more like its major competitors.

Also, much of the growth in business-to-business services reflects corporate preoccupation with managing risk (such as securities exchange employees who juggle currency fluctuations), speculation and reshuffling of assets (such as lawyers and their staffs who negotiate takeovers), and attempts to cut costs (such as temporary workers and subcontractors who displace full-time workers, or consultants who fight unions). Some of it also stems from developments that have potential productive value, such as custodial staffs who maintain office buildings for the white-collar workforce or specialized consulting, especially in computerization.

The so-called "service economy" in large part exists in services to the manufacturing sector, Stephen S. Cohen and John Zysman argue in their 1987 book *Manufacturing Matters: The Myth of the Post-Industrial Economy* (Basic Books). But the kinds of business-to-business services American corporations have adopted reflect at least two fundamental strategic weaknesses—first, treating employees as expendable rather than investing in them and giving them a voice in the workplace, and, second, focusing

on financial manipulation rather than the basics of good design and better manufacturing processes. If U.S. corporations had taken their manufacturing more seriously, they would probably have generated quite different service jobs, possibly fewer in number, more skilled and better paid.

The new Victorian era: Much of the service job growth has been of dubious value to the overall standard of living. More people have had to work longer hours just to stay where they were financially, and to accommodate them there are more restaurants and stores open all night and all weekend. For the busy professional and executive families—whose real incomes have been growing—there are increasing service jobs catering to their needs. But the economy looks less and less like the old mythical ideal of the all middle-class America and more like a recycled Victorian model of affluent households with domestic service staffs (except that now many of the servants—still disproportionately black, recent immigrant and female—are available in a market outside the home, such as day care centers, laundries or even shopping services). Only a few Americans at the top may be better off.

John J. Sweeney and Karen Nussbaum describe the difficulties facing those who toil at the bottom of the service pyramid in a useful new book, *Solutions for the New Work Force: Policies for a New Social Contract* (Seven Locks Press). For many, the authors point out, service jobs mean low pay, fewer benefits and little security. Almost one-third of U.S. workers are now holding "contingent" jobs—jobs that are part time, temporary or on contract. Half of all the new employment in the '80s was part time or temporary, even though a growing percentage of part-time jobholders want full-time work. But employers prefer the contingent worker, who gets no benefits, is easy to fire and is harder to unionize.

Sweeney, president of the Service Employees Union,

INSIDE STORY

and Nussbaum, executive director of 9 to 5: the National Organization of Working Women, outline policy remedies to help service sector employees. They argue for a higher minimum wage, pay equity for equivalent work, prorated health and pension benefits for part-time workers, more widespread and portable pension plans, paid family leave for pregnancy and other needs, better care for children and the elderly and greater rights at work.

Retooling the American job machine: But such well-advised moves on their own are likely to reduce service employment. Already 9 to 5 argues that service sector workers are suffering greater job displacement than manufacturing, accounting for 47 percent of displaced workers from 1983 to 1988, compared to 39 percent for manufacturing. And Thurow warns that the boom in services is largely finished. In some areas (like all-night stores), there may not be much demand for new services; in others (like finance), there may be more international competition. Technological change may also eliminate many clerical jobs.

Manufacturing—rather than the service or agriculture sectors—will have to redress the U.S. trade balance, Thurow argues. And the MIT Commission on Industrial Productivity recently concluded that American business must increasingly rely on a long-term commitment to better-skilled workers in a more democratic workplace, flexible specialization in production and a more long-term perspective on public and private investment. Businesses must cooperate more, not only with workers and government, but also with other businesses.

Those prescriptions for manufacturing apply equally to the service economy, as a *Wall Street Journal* report last week indicated some businesses have already discovered. If followed, the future service economy of the U.S. need not be a low-wage, unskilled ghetto. The great American job machine will then have to be powered by something other than poverty wages and exploitation. □

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By William Gasperini

PANAMA CITY, PANAMA

CONFUSION RULED PANAMA IN THE BLOODY aftermath of its May 7 presidential election. As *In These Times* went to press, Panama's election tribunal was nullifying the vote and supporters of military ruler Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega were beating opposition candidates in the streets.

It appeared as though Noriega was determined to stay in power—even after his hand-picked civilian presidential candidate, Carlos Duque, had lost the election, and even after the government's attempts to fraudulently award victory to Duque had been condemned worldwide. Noriega appeared to have the resources to stay put: support of the armed forces and paramilitary thugs as well as a purported fortune allegedly amassed through drug trafficking.

Will Bush come to shove? Even as bullets buzzed above their heads in this city's streets, however, Panamanians had their minds on Washington, where President Bush announced he was sending some 2,000 troops to the Panama canal area, ostensibly to protect American lives and property. Bush did not rule out "further action." Many observers feared the U.S. president would try to capitalize on the postelection chaos and do what he and his predecessor had been unable to accomplish for more than a year: force out Noriega, their onetime friend turned hated foe.

But late last week the consensus among most observers here was that heavy-handed tactics by the Bush administration would prove disastrous. Even opposition leaders urged restraint by Washington, and looked instead to the region's other countries for support in their efforts to oust Noriega.

"Any military intervention would be resisted by the majority of the Panamanian people," said opposition presidential candidate Guillermo Endara, the nullified election's apparent winner. "Peaceful civic action, along with diplomatic pressure, is the only way."

Many regional observers hoped that the crisis in Panama might even breathe new life into the "Group of Eight," an affiliation of countries formed several years ago in an attempt to seek unity so that Latin America could solve its own problems. The Group of Eight—which has really been the "Group of Seven" since Noriega ousted President Eric Arturo Delvalle in February 1988 in a power play following U.S. drug charges against the general—has been moribund in recent months.

Latin American governments responded quickly by applying diplomatic pressure in an attempt to force Noriega to recognize the real results of the balloting—results that international and church observers say represented a landslide victory for opposition candidate Endara. Peru and Venezuela were the first to issue condemnations of the fraudulent election process.

The sheer scale of the fraud and the overwhelming vote—an estimated 75 percent—against government candidate Duque made the opposition victory impossible to hide. At first, attention focused on the "irregularities" that occurred during the actual vote. The opposition, led by presidential candidate Endara, charged that members of the military often voted more than once and that the names of persons long dead appeared on registration lists. But incidents of fraud



Even the Panamanian opposition is against heavy-handed U.S. pressure to oust Noriega.

A "cornered animal" bites the hand that once fed him

such as these were relatively minor compared to what came next.

"Disappearing" the vote: The real story of election fraud began after the polls closed. By law the ballots were to be first counted at the precinct level in the presence of representatives of all parties, who were to sign, and even leave thumbprints, on tally sheets. These sheets were to be turned in to district centers, and then to a national center for a final count.

Many of these sheets never made it, as soldiers and groups of paramilitary government supporters hauled them off at gunpoint. In one incident, the tally sheet from the suburb of San Miguelito—127,000 votes out of a country total of just over 1 million—simply vanished into the night after soldiers ransacked a vote-counting center.

Then the final count process itself was militarized as soldiers surrounded the downtown convention center where the tallies—or what was left of them—arrived to be tabulated. But by this time, no independent observers would legitimize the government version of the count.

Although government candidate Duque proclaimed himself president on election night, based on a highly questionable exit poll, every other count showed the opposition ahead by margins as high as five to one. The Roman Catholic Church issued a communique showing that close to 75 percent of the public voted for the three-party opposition coalition, ADOC-Civilista, which is led by the Christian Democratic Party.

Perhaps most telling, however, was a count taken by 279 foreign observers of all political stripes who had carefully monitored voting tables throughout the country. Their results: more than 70 percent for the demo-

cratic opposition alliance.

"It was overwhelming," said Dante Oberlin, an Argentine trade unionist. "This vote was really a plebiscite on Noriega. Not even [Chile's Gen. Augusto] Pinochet lost by such an enormous margin. For me this vote has no precedent."

The Carter factor: A delegation from the U.S. Congress sent by President Bush also quickly claimed fraud, as expected. Bush had reportedly approved a covert operation to supply the opposition campaign with more

Panama's Gen. Noriega just said "no"—"no" to his people, "no" to election results, "no" to democracy and "no" to George Bush.

than \$10 million—aid that the opposition refused. But it was former President Jimmy Carter who added legitimacy to fraud charges when he said the government had "robbed the election from the Panamanian people."

As the signer of the Panama Canal Treaty, Carter is revered by all sides in this country, almost as a national hero. During the campaign, rumors abounded that Carter was the one person who might have enough leverage with Noriega to convince the stubborn general that the election afforded a prime opportunity to find an honorable exit.

But it was not to be. Although Carter did meet with Noriega, the former president's welcome quickly soured when he pointed

out the irregularities—especially what he called the wholesale "substitution of original vote lists with counterfeit tallies" the day after the balloting.

The U.S. influence on the situation may be limited, as in the recent past, by the nationalist sentiment in Panama. Thus it is the region's reaction that carries the most weight now. Opposition leaders immediately began seeking international support by meeting with foreign diplomats and telephoning regional presidents. Action in the Organization of American States and a diplomatic quarantine to further isolate Panama are possible.

Endara, the would-be president-elect, is a heavyset politician with a jovial nature but little charisma. During the campaign he had two very capable vice-presidential running mates. The opposition leaders often acted as a trio, particularly in public appearances, when enthusiastic crowds often gathered to cheer them. Coming from well-to-do families with extensive business interests, however, the three symbolize the opposition's traditional identification with the monied classes. It's an image problem that government officials tried desperately to exploit, claiming their own eight-party coalition was the true representative of the poor.

Panamanians also say the U.S.-Panama dispute is another issue that has been distorted by the general. The government has tried to cast itself as the champion of anti-imperialism, defending Panama's sovereignty against U.S. hegemony. Government leaders also try to exploit the memory of the still-popular Omar Torrijos, the populist general who instituted numerous reforms, signed the canal treaty with Carter in 1977 and died in a mysterious plane crash in 1981. But the public has not fallen for it.

"They wrap themselves in a flag of phony nationalism, trying to make it appear as though the problem is all with the U.S.," said Almeida Guillen, an opposition legislative candidate. "The problem is not with the U.S.; the problem is with the military elite who refuse to yield, even in the face of overwhelming public desire for change."

Cornered animal: But the public's desire may mean little. With ties to everyone from drug traffickers to Cuba to international intelligence agencies—most significantly the CIA—Noriega's yielding of power might be more difficult than it would seem.

"The problem is for the opposition to find a way to grant him an honorable exit," said an election observer with extensive experience in the region. "For example, if he goes into exile, plenty of people will be after him, from the CIA to the KGB and drug traffickers. It's almost the case of a cornered animal at this point. Taken aback by the extent of rejection his own people have demonstrated, he'll either attack or retreat further into the cave."

As *In These Times* went to press, Noriega was opting for the first choice—violently breaking up attempts by the opposition to demonstrate publicly. In a violent confrontation May 10, all three opposition leaders were attacked by Noriega's paramilitary forces, and Endara had to be briefly hospitalized for a concussion. What the "cornered animal" would do next was anybody's guess—but it was clear that he was willing to fight fiercely for his territory. □

William Gasperini writes regularly on Latin American affairs.

By Joel Bleifuss

Dust bowl days

James E. Hansen, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, has gone public with his criticism of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This month the OMB censored Hansen's congressional testimony on the dangers of the greenhouse effect. The scientist had been planning to say that it is now possible to conclude that droughts, storms and extreme temperatures are attributable to the greenhouse effect. A world-renowned climatologist, Hansen was the key source for the *In These Times*'s article "Reagan's Legacy of Hot Air," the second in a three-part series on the greenhouse effect. (See *In These Times*, Jan. 25, 1989.) When journalist Dick Russell was preparing this piece last fall, Hansen and he agreed it would be best not to mention Hansen's role in the story, because he is employed by the federal government and his research relies on federal funding.

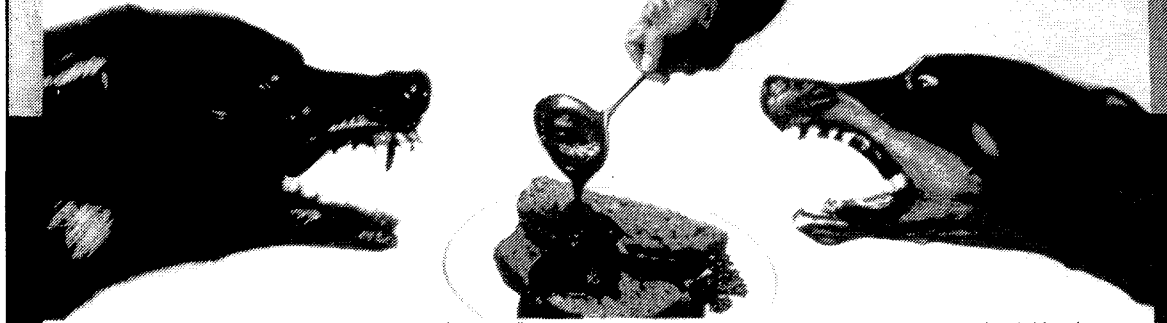
Two years of censorship: As Russell reported, the government first censored Hansen in the summer of 1987 when the OMB forbade him to ask Congress to increase funding for climatological research. Then in November of that year, OMB previewed further testimony on the greenhouse effect and, in an effort to soften the implications of Hansen's data, they substituted the word "probably" for "clearly." Later, during the heat wave of the summer of 1988, Hansen told the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources that he had "99-percent confidence" that "the greenhouse effect has been detected and is changing our climate now." In the wake of his testimony, *In These Times* learned that high-level government officials—including representatives for the White House and OMB—met to try "to figure out how to keep Hansen quiet."

Dick Russell comments: "Last September, when he told me the story of what the OMB had done to him, he said, 'This is the way we were taught they do things in the Soviet Union, not in this country. Censoring and tampering with science is not what American democracy stands for.' At the time he was reluctant to tell all because his job might have been in jeopardy, but he gave me the contacts and I validated the story. This man is probably doing the most important research for the future of the planet Earth. He was justifiably concerned that his funding could be cut if he spoke out. He has now taken that chance for the sake of the truth. It is clear to me that the administration wants to keep news of the greenhouse effect quiet, so that it doesn't upset the status quo in terms of energy policy. Drastic changes are called for, given Hansen's and others' findings on climate change. You're talking about transforming the whole fossil fuel-based economy and moving to alternative energy sources and greater efficiency. The powers that run this country don't want to see this happen, especially very quickly. George Bush has proclaimed himself an environmentalist. But the telling thing is that nothing has changed from what the OMB was doing under Reagan. In fact, the censorship looks even worse under Bush."

Office of information control

The censorship of James Hansen has focused needed attention on the political role played by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the executive agency that manages congressional appropriations. Every federal agency that wants to communicate with Congress first has to get clearance from the OMB. According to Shannon Ferguson of OMB Watch, those agencies the OMB doesn't want Congress to hear from have difficulty getting cleared. The OMB's control of what Congress hears increased in 1984 when Reagan issued Executive Order 12498, which says that the OMB must approve in advance any federal scientific inquiry that might affect policy. Executive Order 12498 was put into action in 1985 around the issue of infant mortality. From 1935 to 1980 U.S. infant mortality gradually declined, but from 1980 to 1985 the rate remained constant. The U.S. Public Health Service wanted to find out if the reduction in federal funding for community health services had anything to do with this leveling out of infant mortality rates. The OMB invoked 12498 and stopped that inquiry. The order similarly forbids agencies from revealing that they have been forbidden to collect information. As Ferguson sees it, the OMB ran into trouble in Hansen's case by "crossing over a line that Galileo straightened out in the 16th century: in matters of morals and policy the church is supreme, but when it comes to statements of fact, figures in authority have to back off."

DON'T BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU



A project of Patrick Media Group and LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions) created by Daniel J. Martinez

Nice doggies: "Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds You," Daniel Martinez' 12-foot by 48-foot billboard artwork, spent the first part of this year posted at a busy intersection in Santa Monica, Calif. Critic Peter Kosenko of Manhattan Beach, Calif., interprets the sign: "The dogs are in direct violation of the cliché 'Don't bite the hand that feeds you.' It is a cliché that those who have control over other people's livelihoods use to passify those they have control over. The cliché is a veiled threat, easily internalized by whole populations fearful of unemployment. Martinez' statement addresses you, and the picture represents you as a dog. In other words, if the hand that feeds you treats you like a dog, you might very well feel like biting it. The billboard feeds on your subliminal resentment against being economically used and abused, a feeling that no amount of gravy can placate."

Louganis flops into pool of male stereotypes

Olympic diver Greg Louganis, eager for national endorsements and public appearances, is now more often appearing in the media due to controversy surrounding his private life.

On March 29, a California superior court judge ordered Jim Babbitt, Louganis' former live-in manager of six years, to stay at least 500 feet away from the diver unless there is mutual consent. Louganis sought the court order, saying that Babbitt has threatened to make public "confidential and private facts" about him unless he rehired Babbitt as his manager or compensated him.

This can't be pleasant for Louganis. After all, he is "the greatest diver in the world," according to American Express—Louganis' only major national contract since the Seoul Olympic Games. But he has had little luck entering the seven-figure product endorsement scene previously populated by the likes of Mary Lou Retton, Bruce Jenner and Dorothy Hammill. There have been several reasons for this, not the least of which are rumors that Louganis might be gay.

In an example of art imitating life, a recent episode of the TV series *L.A. Law* has a fictional Olympic athlete signing a \$3 million contract with American Food to appear on the box of Crunch-O's cereal. But when American Food found out the athlete was gay and planned to come out publicly, the company tried to get out of the contract. A heated courtroom drama followed, during which the athlete said, "I'm proud to be an American.... I worked for my country and now my country is saying, 'We don't want you because

you're gay.'" The representative from the fictional American Food responded that it would be nice to live in a country that didn't discriminate against homosexuality, and that he wished people were different.

Though the *L.A. Law* plot is sympathetic in its portrayal of homosexuality, in real life the cereal box issue is more insidious. First of all, Louganis reportedly never signed a contract with General Mills. And the company never made the faux pas of publicly revealing why they did not find Louganis worthy of appearing on the immortal Wheaties box. General Mills says only that none of the 1988 Olympic medalists met Wheaties' three criteria: career achievement, popular appeal and off-the-field wholesomeness. (The two other gold medalists considered and rejected for possible commercial stardom were both black women.)

Following the advice of the New York-based Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), people have written General Mills saying they thought that Louganis did meet the three criteria. General Mills replied that it already has a cereal box contract with basketball star Michael Jordan.

The second variance from the *L.A. Law* script is that Louganis, although he has never denied that he might be gay, he has never publicly stated that he does—or does not—prefer sex with men. Louganis has consistently responded that questions about his sexuality do not pertain to his life as a public sports figure.

Yes and no. In a society that actively discriminates against homosexual behavior, sexuality becomes a public issue. And when an ex-lover can ruin a celebrity's public life by revealing facts of his or her private life, sex is political.

Many gay and lesbian public figures have been forced to carefully navigate between a public and private existence. Unlike gender or ethnicity, sexuality can be—and often is—reduced to the most private of acts.

The dilemma with marketing Louganis is not only that he may or may not be gay, but that he does not fit our cultural stereotype of a male sports hero. In a much-publicized quote from a *Wall Street Journal* article on the lack of public appeal of last year's Olympians, Marty Blackman, a New York sports marketer, said, "When most advertisers are looking for the male hero, the word 'macho' trails along very closely. I don't find Louganis a macho guy."

Articles on Louganis have focused on his mother—"no matter what happens, my mother still loves me"—his teddy bear and his tendency to cry after competitions. Over the years *Sports Illustrated* has consistently portrayed Louganis as "pretty," "gorgeous," "aesthetic," "gentle," "shy," passive and artistic as opposed to competitive. *GQ* did a cover story on Louganis that both alluded to his sexuality and depicted him as the epitome of narcissism.

In the world of sports, a person need only have talent (although financial support also helps). But in the world of commercial images, one must be marketable to a mass audience. Now that Louganis has announced his retirement from diving in order to pursue product endorsements and an acting career, the tension between his private existence and his public image can only increase.

Ironically, so far Louganis' only film role has been as a womanizing beach bum in the short-lived movie *Dirty Laundry*.

—Scott Shaeffer

El Salvador's grave situation

SANTIAGO NONUALCO, EL SALVADOR—Reports received by the Roman Catholic Church's human rights office, *Tutela Legal*, and the non-governmental Salvadoran Human Rights Commission indicate political violence against civilians is on the rise here in the province of La Paz.

Since April 1988 at least 18 civilians in the province have been killed. Human rights groups blame the Salvadoran army for 12 of those deaths, including the recent torture-murders of Andres Colindres Vasquez, 48, his wife Maria Luisa, 47, and their oldest son Miguel, 28.

The Colindreses disappeared February 28 near the town of Santiago Nonualco, 35 miles southeast of San Salvador while Salvadoran military units were conducting military operations in the dusty hills around the family farm. The father and son had both been picked up by the army before.

On March 7, Tomas Colindres, the oldest of the three surviving sons, discovered the partially buried corpses of his parents and older brother in shallow graves less than a mile from their hilltop farm. After an initial examination by officials from the local justice of the peace and human rights organizations, Tomas, 20, and his brothers Manuel, 18, and Pedro, 16, re-buried their parents and brother on a hillside behind the family farm.

Later that month the boys stood on that hillside with relatives, officials from the attorney general's office, human rights workers and members of a local army patrol. They watched two doctors exhume the now-putrified bodies of their loved ones in an effort to determine the cause of death.

The two peasant gravediggers, brandishing a mattock and shovel, opened the grave of Andres Colindres. Observers winced as their tools hit the corpse's chest cavity with a dull thud.

As clouds of dust and a stench rose from the grave, veterans of similar exhumations tied kerchiefs over their faces. The men from the attorney general's office donned gas masks and began scribbling onto clipboards.

One doctor jumped into the waist-deep hole and grabbed the remains of an unearthed right leg. He tried to pull the rest of the body from beneath the dirt, but the femur gave a sickening rip and tore away from the hip bone. He set the leg on the edge of the grave and ordered the peasants to continue digging.

As the doctor stacked the bones and poked his rubber-gloved hands into the grave's red muck, the army patrol fanned out across the hillside, looking for rebels from the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). The apparent commander of the army patrol carried a video camcorder and a Polaroid camera. As the observers closed in around the doctors working the graves, the patrol leader shot pic-

tures and video of the faces in the crowd.

The doctors could not find the hands of Andres Colindres. One doctor, holding up the jagged end of what had been a forearm, said, "Both hands amputated."

The buzzing of flies was growing as the peasants unearthed the grave containing what remained of Maria Luisa Colindres. Her upper torso was missing and the doctors could not find her head. Her left leg was missing above the kneecap. Again the doctors quietly said, "Amputation," and the judicial officials diligently wrote it down on their pads.

The gravediggers then opened the grave of Miguel Colindres. One doctor began scraping off the dust—which soon turned to red mud—to examine the rib cage. He determined that the victim had a hole in his left back as well as a collapsed left lung.

Throughout the exhumation, the surviving Colindres boys watched dry-eyed. "They've seen worse," said one representative of a human rights group. "All of the boys have been captured before by the military." The most recently "captured" was 18-year-old Manuel. According to the representative from the human rights organization, the army had seized Manuel two weeks before his parents disappeared. Soldiers tor-

tured him with electric shocks, tied a sack dusted with lime around his head and hung the teenager by his testicles. They wanted information on the FMLN rebels who sometimes operate in the region.

Atop the ridge, a local TV news crew asked one of the doctors about the cause of death. "They were victims of a violent death," he said.

Human rights organizations are now concerned that the victory by the right-wing National Republican Alliance (ARENA) in the March 19 presidential election has only intensified the violence against civilians.

According to the Central American Human Rights Commission, a coalition of regional human rights groups, in the two and a half weeks immediately after the victory of ARENA presidential candidate Alfredo Cristiani, death squads killed 152 people.

"Complete latitude has already been given to the armed forces and paramilitary groups to increase repression," a commission spokesperson told journalists at an April 21 press conference in San Jose, Costa Rica. And during the first three months of this year, the commission recorded 844 death squad killings—almost double the number of political killings for the same period in 1988.

—David E. Bates

What remains of the right leg of Andres Colindres, father of four, is examined.



David E. Bates

Motown mourns

A few weeks ago Kenneth Cockrel, one of *In These Times's* earliest supporters, died of a heart attack in Detroit. Denise Crittendon and Charlie Cain of *The Detroit News* report that 1,200 relatives, friends and admirers gathered at a municipal auditorium to pay tribute to the former Detroit city councilman, described by the two reporters as "a Marxist revolutionary and statesman who many expected would be mayor of Detroit one day." As his brother Jesse remembered him, Kenneth exhibited leadership ability early in life as a paperboy in Detroit. "I thought that no one had bigger, shinier bikes or better dogs than Ken. Why? Because he said so. And even if it was proven that his dogs and bikes weren't the best, he'd convince others that having a better dog or bike was squandering, unprogressive and counter-revolutionary. ... People used to say, 'He's so smart—he's got rich folks sending checks to his house. He doesn't even have to collect [the newspaper subscriptions].'"

Another modest proposal

The issue of aborting unborn boys is being raised in the pages of *Sojourner: The Women's Forum*, a Boston-based feminist monthly. Last December Tobe Taylor of upstate New York wrote an article she hoped would engage the lesbian community in an "honest dialogue" on the "available and legal" option of choosing not to carry male fetuses to term. Taylor wrote in part: "Why are lesbian feminists, who have for so long chosen to separate themselves from men, now choosing to raise them? ... Often I have seen even the most separatist of lesbians glaze over and say something like, 'He'll be my son, and I'll love him, too' or 'Somebody's got to raise the good men.' ... Nowhere have I heard the very real question asked: is it possible to raise good men? ... I don't see that any woman is obligated to spend 20 years of intense energy and time raising a boy who will enjoy privileges and safety she will never receive. ... I became pregnant after four years of careful preparation and thought, having meticulously used all the methods available to ensure a female child. I had a chorionic villus sampling at nine weeks and was told that the fetus was a male. With great difficulty, I aborted him. ... It was the most painful thing I ever did and not a decision to be made without intense self-scrutiny. ... Although I believe abortion should be legal and available to all, I don't know (and may never know) if it's karmically, spiritually all right to do."

Readers respond: Taylor got her dialogue. In the following months the issue of gender-specific abortion filled the *Sojourner* letters pages. Taylor received a few letters of support, including one from Alix Dobkin of Woodstock, N.Y., who wrote, "This point of view—the reluctance to bring another boy into this testosterone-crazed world—is exceptional among lesbian mothers-to-be in my experience. And I almost never see it in print. What a relief!" Taylor also had her critics. Susan Jhirad of Medford, Pa., commented, "Tobe Taylor's views don't seem particularly 'brave' (as someone said), they seem, rather, 'brave new world.'" And Ellyn Stier of Brighton, Mass., likening the proposal to "experimenting with eugenics," wrote, "It is and should be a woman's right to choose to abort rather than raise an unwanted child. However, we must use this right responsibly and not play 'roulette of pregnancy' with our bodies and human life." Aren Stone of Cambridge, Mass., was one of several lesbian mothers of sons to write in. "I resent the patronizing (and I use that word intentionally) attitudes and assumptions toward lesbians with sons," she wrote. "I'm tired of the silence after answering the question, 'What did you have?' I'm tired of the message that mothers of sons need all this special support—special workshops, support groups, meetings—because our lives are now so hard, our needs so great. The literature for this past year's New England Women's Musical Retreat stated that though boys, including infants, were to be confined to their own camp, 'we encourage mothers of sons to meet for support.' ... Support is wonderful; we all need it. The attitudes implicit here are not. ... I share Taylor's questions about raising sons, and I share her fears. ... My son is only 14 months old, and he's wonderful—happy, funny, sweet, beautiful. ... He'll be taught a lot of things, but I don't know what he'll learn. Our children are not our property, and they're not within our control. We don't know how any of them will turn out. ... That is the very scary and very wonderful thing about raising children."

By Salim Muwakkil

BLACK CHILDREN ARE BEARING THE BRUNT of the declining fortunes of African-Americans. They are overrepresented on every list of victimization: from fetal malnutrition to fatal addictions, from functional illiteracy to unwanted pregnancy, and many points in between. As you read these words, nearly one-half of African-American children under the age of 18 are living in poverty.

The road out of poverty has also become less accessible. Sharp cuts in financial aid and skyrocketing tuition have pushed higher education further out of reach for young

BLACK AMERICA

black students. College enrollment among African-Americans, particularly males, is way down from a decade past. Meanwhile there are more young black males incarcerated now than at any other time in history.

This state of affairs represents a major crisis, the dimensions of which are only hinted at by the drug-induced carnage in Detroit, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., or the "wilding" youths of Central Park North. National leadership seems unable or unwilling to figure out ways to address the problem, and that's the bad news.

The good news is that African-Americans are finding some success through solutions of their own design. Traditional institutions, like the black church, are joining forces with more contemporary fraternal and professional groups to mount a counterattack on the forces assailing the African-American future.

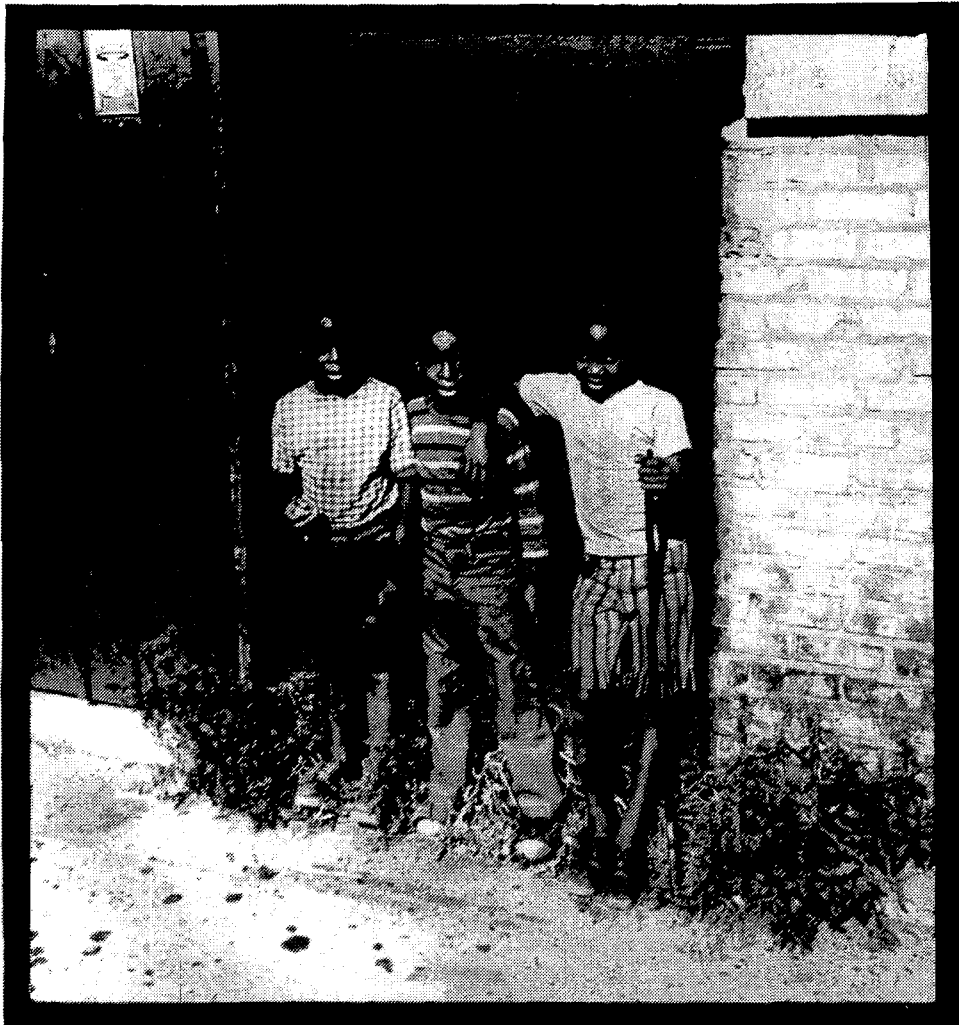
Defending children: "If those of us who have made it don't build a bridge back to the children, youths and families engulfed by poverty, low academic skills, unemployment and hopelessness," warns Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), "they're going to drown and undermine the future for which our forebears dreamed, struggled and died." As the head of the Washington, D.C.-based CDF, Edelman has earned a reputation as one of the most influential congressional lobbyists for children's issues. "This problem is much too large to be solved by volunteerism," she says.

She is also well known for her insistence that successful African-Americans must become more involved in efforts to help educate the next generation. "Schools cannot do the job alone," Edelman contends. "Every segment of the black community must support learning and supplement the work of schools through tutoring, volunteer work, mentoring and encouraging increased parental involvement."

There has been a steady growth in programs of the type described by Edelman in recent months. African-Americans whose beliefs span the ideological spectrum are reaching rare consensus on issues that affect black youth. What's more, they are engaging in concerted efforts to ameliorate the crisis.

For example, Project SPIRIT, a pilot tutorial program sponsored by the Congress of National Black Churches (CNBC), has markedly improved the academic skills of the children in the three cities it serves. But the emphasis isn't exclusively on academics, according to CNBC's executive director, Rev. Michael Lemmons. "Project SPIRIT also makes sure stu-

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Poverty is their lot: the good news is the growth of self-help programs.

Local efforts growing to save the children

dents are well informed about their cultural heritage." The after-school sessions conducted in 15 affiliated churches in Oakland, Calif., Indianapolis and Atlanta have been so successful, says project director Vanella Crawford, that similar programs are being planned for several other cities. The CNBC is an umbrella organization for six of the seven major black church denominations.

The Brooklyn, N.Y.-based African People's Christian Organization has initiated a pro-

People are searching for self-sufficient black institutions to energize communities.

gram that seeks to expand on the "big brother" concept. "We are trying to address many of our community problems by supplying our young men with role models from among our successful African-American males," says Lorenzo Chambers, coordinator of the program.

"The little brothers and big brothers meet at least three hours a week, and we plan a group activity at least once a month," Chambers explains. If successful, the program—entitled "Man to Man"—will be implemented in the 100-plus, mostly East Coast churches associated with the group.

Groups in many other cities also have tailored their programs to focus exclusively on black males. Through academic tutoring, athletics and workshops on sexuality and drug abuse, the Black Male Youth Health En-

hancement Project at Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., reaches out to young black men from Washington's drug-ravaged inner city. In Oakland, the Allen Temple Baptist Church designed Project Interface to tutor young men in science and computer literacy while boosting their self-esteem.

The "Christfund": Several black churches in the Southeast have adopted a program for adolescent males developed by University of Virginia social science professor Courtland Lee. Called "Black Manhood Training: Body, Mind and Soul," the program was designed initially for use by guidance counselors in the predominantly black Durham, N.C., public school system.

Another approach is advocated by Rev. Gardner C. Taylor, who is the senior pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ, also in Brooklyn. Taylor urges black churches to establish pools of capital to fund programs that aid young people. His own congregation has raised what he calls a "Christfund" of more than \$1 million that is used for youth-oriented projects and some scholarship assistance.

"I believe the Christfund can serve as a model for releasing the incalculable potential financial resources of black churches in America for our own civic and spiritual deliverance," Taylor says. "Think of 10,000 churches across America, each amassing \$250,000 as a permanent fund with the proceeds going annually to programs designed to address the problems of our youth. Such a fund could be a miniature Ford Foundation for our children."

Pointing the way are the Living Consor-

tium in New York's Harlem, which combines the forces of three churches and three community organizations to focus attention on aid to young people, and Chicago's Project IMAGE, a 10-church consortium which focuses on the academic, cultural and personal development of poverty-damaged black youth.

Because the black church historically has represented African-Americans' sole refuge from white domination, the institution has assumed a significance far beyond matters purely religious. The church is the most widely supported institution in the African-American community and thus the best source for the capital needed to fund independent efforts.

Simba training: "Many black communities are in a political, social and economic state of siege," says Cornel West, professor of religion at Princeton University. "People are searching for black institutions that have some self-sufficiency. The black church has a critical role in helping to create more viable economic infrastructures in our community." Many other community interests concede this fact of history and find ways they can cooperate with church leadership to help ease the crisis afflicting African-American youth.

Others seek a more secular route to reaching youth. "The situation is so bleak, I can't really object to all this church activity," says Hannibal Afrik, a Chicago leader of the so-called "Simba" movement. "But," he adds, "we must remember [that] the church performed a very important function during slavery of keeping us heaven-centered, passive and thus easier for slavemasters to handle. For some it's performing that function to this day."

Afrik and his cultural nationalist counterparts in Brooklyn, Cleveland, Detroit and Los Angeles credit African inspiration for their big brother-cum-manhood initiation training program called "Simba"—Kiswahili for "lion." The program emphasizes the youths' responsibility to their families and communities, and in many ways echoes the traditionalist, conservative themes of the church programs. Still, these groups share a strong aversion to church connections. Princeton's West sees their point.

"The black church has to become more grounded in intellectual inquiry," he insists. "We can no longer afford leaders who engage simply in putting forth moral condemnation and ethical rhetoric without any understanding of how power and wealth operate in this society."

Many of these new efforts target black males, since they are most at risk. But several new programs are also aimed specifically at young African-American women. The Delta Sigma Theta and Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) sororities are particularly involved in projects designed to improve the life chances of black females. The two African-American sororities have implemented programs for preventing unwanted pregnancies as well as those to assist single mothers. Their academic tutorial programs are well organized and enthusiastically implemented.

"Blacks can save our youths by becoming the models we so desperately need," says Janet J. Ballard, leader of the AKAs. "We must return to networking with traditional black churches and organizations, and our actions must demonstrate that African-Americans will take the leadership to save our children."

The age of plastics begins to waste away

By David Morris

ST. PAUL, MINN.

WE ALL REMEMBER THE SCENE. AT A party at his parents' house, college graduate Dustin Hoffman gets one-word career advice from an older man: "Plastics." Never was advice more timely. In 1967, when *The Graduate* played at neighborhood theaters, plastics had a toehold in the materials market. Today, in some applications, it has a hammerlock.

This year, for the first time, the total weight of plastic containers produced in the U.S. may exceed glass containers. By 1990 more than 80 percent of all grocery bags may be plastic. Americans' consumption of plastic soared from 2 million tons in 1960 to 27 million tons in 1988.

But while plastic production has shown itself to be easy and cheap, getting rid of it has proved to be neither. Hard-pressed for landfill space, cities across the country have begun to examine their wastes more closely. They have discovered that the trivial 200,000 tons of plastic discards in 1960 has swelled to 15 million tons today and may double again by the year 2000. Even Karl Kemina, director of government affairs for Dow Chemical concedes, "Plastics is a substantial part of the [garbage disposal] problem."

Time for action: This spring the city governments of Minneapolis and St. Paul passed laws that address the problem head-on. The first-of-a-kind laws would ban the sale and use of plastic food packaging and grocery bags that are not actively being recycled. Environmentalists hope the new laws set a precedent for other city halls and state legislatures—where the clash between the environmental danger posed by plastic and the convenience it affords has set off heated debates nationwide.

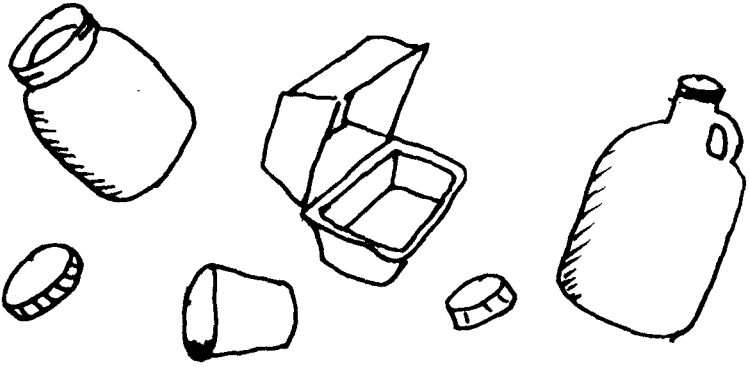
The debate focuses on six major petroleum-based resins out of which 80 percent of all plastics are made (see accompanying chart). More than 40 percent of these resins goes into packaging, which in turn constitutes the overwhelming portion of all plastics in household garbage.

Plastics are attractive for their ease of manufacture, as well as their see-through characteristics for packaging. But plastics also have major drawbacks. If burned, they can pollute. Plastics contribute 71 percent of the lead and 88 percent of the cadmium in the combustible portion of municipal garbage, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Plastic's greatest strength, its indestructibility, is also its greatest weakness. Plastic litter doesn't decompose. Plastics in water choke fish, birds and sea turtles that mistake them for jellyfish.

Plastics are also most difficult to recycle. Their high volume-to-weight ratio raises collection costs, and their scrap value is low. Unlike aluminum or glass, plastic products can rarely be recycled into their original form. For example, soda bottles, which are commonly made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET), cannot be recycled into PET bottles. They end up as trash cans or bathtubs. High-density polyethylene (HDPE) is often used to manufacture milk jugs, but when recycled it becomes filler for pillows. A mixture of different kinds of plastic can be made into a high-priced but limited-market "lumber," yet the scrap has no market value at all.

Resin	Percentage of the packaging market	Typical application
High-density polyethylene (HDPE)	31	milk jugs
Low-density polyethylene (LDPE)	33	trash bags
Polystyrene (PS)	11	egg cartons, fast-food containers
Polypropylene (PP)	9	bottle caps, flexible yogurt containers
Polyethylene terephthalate (PET)	7	soda bottles, peanut butter jars
Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)	5	imported water containers



Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Thus, while a very high proportion of plastics are technically recyclable, less than 1 percent is actually recycled due to economic and logistic limitations. Moreover, 90 percent of even this relatively tiny amount of recycling is done in states where consumers are required to put deposits on PET bottles.

Reason to recycle: Until now, local governments dealt with the issue by banning the use of certain plastics outright. "By far the greatest number of laws concern Styrofoam [polystyrene]," says Jeanne Wirka of Environmental Action, author of *Wrapped in Plastic*. The new laws in St. Paul and Minneapolis take another approach. "This is not a ban," says St. Paul City Councillor Bob Long, who conceived the initiative. "It is a recycling ordinance."

The ordinances outlaw the sale and use of plastic food and beverage packaging, grocery bags and fast-food containers—except in cases where there is an active recycling program. The objective is to force private industry to make a choice: stop using plastics or initiate recycling programs.

City Councillor Steve Cramer, chief sponsor of the Minneapolis ordinance, notes that aluminum recycling is profitable and glass recycling is a break-even proposition. But plastics recycling is far from break-even. Thus, Cramer argues, if cities picked up the costs, it would constitute an unfair "subsidy."

To illustrate Cramer's point, Long points to last year's decision by Ramsey County, where St. Paul is located, not to add plastics to its curbside recycling program because it would cost \$500 a ton to collect material worth only \$100 a ton. Under the terms of the new ordinances, such a decision would automatically ban most plastic packaging—unless industry picked up the slack. "We are sending a strong message to industry," Long declares, "that they can no longer dump on the market products that are not environmentally or economically recyclable."

The new laws allow unrecyclable plastics to be used only when no economically or environmentally acceptable alternative is available. That decision is made by the city health director, with advice from a citizens

committee. The ordinances do not allow businesses to use new "degradable" plastics (see accompanying story).

The Twin Cities' laws go into effect July 1, 1990, and many Minnesota grocers are already concerned. "There are tens of thousands of products on our shelves," worries John Olson of the Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA). "We're the ones who have to deal with dissatisfied customers."

Grocers also argue that city residents will simply shop in the suburbs if inconvenienced by the Minneapolis-St. Paul laws. But Bill Barnhart, staff member of the Minneapolis City Council, says that "three [suburban] city councils tell me they have the

votes to pass [similar ordinances], and another dozen have requested copies."

Plastic politics: But it's not clear whether the Minneapolis-St. Paul laws will ever go into effect. The Twin Cities' ordinances have sparked two opposite pieces of state legislation. One would overturn the ordinances; the other would extend them statewide. Barnhart gives the measure to overturn a fighting chance, despite Gov. Rudy Perpich's opposition. But, he insists, "Opponents tell us it should be done on the state level. On the state level they tell us it should be done on the national level. But nothing was being done."

Whatever the outcome, the vox populi is clear. A few days before the Minneapolis vote, the MGA and the Council for Solid Waste Solutions, an association of plastic manufacturers,

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took out a full-page ad in the *Star-Tribune* urging readers to "Call your city council" to save "see-through wrappings, yogurt and potato chip packages, vegetable oil bottles."

But the ad backfired, according to Minneapolis Councillor Dennis Schulstad, who became an enthusiastic supporter when calls flooded in 12-1 in favor. The ordinance passed in Minneapolis on March 31 by a vote of 12-0. St. Paul's city council enacted the legislation on April 27 by a vote of 6-1.

The Twin Cities' ordinances do not take effect for more than a year, but at least one major grocer has already switched to paper egg cartons. Ironically, this occurred the same week two local paper companies stopped buying newsprint because of a glut caused by successful local recycling efforts. One paper company is reportedly planning to manufacture cardboard egg cartons.

Muses Bob Long, "We're creating a new market for newsprint by forcing plastics to pay its own way."

David Morris is a syndicated columnist whose work originates at the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch*. He is also a director of the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Local Self-Reliance.

Do biodegradable plastics really degrade?

Last year Minnesota required all state agencies to purchase only plastic trash bags that are "degradable." Illinois followed soon thereafter. Iowa and Wisconsin are not far behind.

Degradables generally add 6-20 percent starch to the plastic. Microbial or chemical action eats away the starch, disintegrating the plastic and exposing more area to bacterial action, thereby accelerating degradation. Some degrade in direct sunlight. Others degrade in soil or water.

"I view the developing degradable plastics industry as a win-win situation for the environment and the economy of Illinois and the nation," says Joe Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Corn Marketing Board. He sees a potential 150 million to 300 million bushel market for plastics. That would raise corn prices 15 cents per bushel, according to the National Corn Growers Association.

Scientists agree that the degradable plastics break down to what is known as "plastic dust," but some experts wonder whether the dust really degrades all the way down to its elemental form—carbon dioxide and water—in a short period.

J. Michael Gould, a scientist at the Northern Regional Research Center in Peoria notes, "Little published evidence sup-

port[s] the contention that plastics containing starch are indeed degraded by living systems." Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), manufacturer of the degradable plastic PolyClean, concedes, "Extensive research is being conducted at this time to more completely answer this question." The American Society for Testing Materials is currently developing standards for degradability.

A more substantial concern is about the potential impact of degradables on recycling. "Degradable plastics are entirely compatible with recycling efforts," ADM argues, "as they are targeted for plastic products that have a low probability of recycling."

Others are less sanguine. "I've talked with materials brokers," responds Caroline Rennie, plastics analyst for the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, "who worry that if degradable plastics get mixed in with their resins it will reduce their sales."

Degradability may be an attractive feature for yard-waste bags or agricultural mulch, where composting is involved, or as a way to reduce marine pollution. But the environmental community is wary of a technology that, says Jeanne Wirka of Environmental Action, "may encourage a throwaway ethic."

—S.T.



U.S.-Soviet trade is a hard sell

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

FEARING A CONSERVATIVE UPROAR, THE BUSH administration is following in its dealings with the Soviet Union what it hopes is the path of least resistance. Instead of advancing new arms control proposals, the administration is edging quietly toward liberalizing trade with the USSR and Eastern Europe. Last month the president announced an economic aid program for Poland, and early this month he decided to subsidize the sale of 1.5 million tons of wheat to the Soviets.

Bush's measures have nonetheless sparked a heated debate about East-West trade. While business leaders and the foreign policy elite enthusiastically back liberalization, conservatives and some Democrats oppose what they see as concessions to the East. At a May 3 Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on this trade issue, former Reagan National Security Council official Roger W. Robinson Jr. warned that liberalization "could cause incalculable harm to U.S. national security and to [NATO] alliance relations."

Like many current Washington debates, this one is notable for what British novelist Kingsley Amis once called "pseudo-arguments about non-issues." Lacking an arms control proposal to denounce, conservatives are projecting their fears of ideological betrayal onto Bush's timid trade initiatives, while moderate Democrats appear to be using the issue rhetorically to inoculate themselves against Lee Atwater-style campaign tactics in 1990 and 1992. As a result, it has been hard to determine what is really at stake in this trade debate.

Trade and detente: Since the 1917 Russian Revolution, U.S.-Soviet trade has ebbed and flowed with each shift of U.S.-Soviet relations. After the revolution, the U.S. participated in an economic blockade of Soviet Russia. But after the Roosevelt administration recognized the USSR in 1933 and granted it "most-favored-nation status"—which

exempts friendly trading partners from prohibitively high tariffs—the U.S. became the Soviets' major trading partner. In 1951, during the Korean War, the U.S. revoked the Soviet Union's most-favored-nation status, and trade was again reduced to a bare trickle.

In 1972 President Richard Nixon signed a trade agreement with the USSR granting Export-Import Bank credits to it and presaging a restoration of most-favored-nation status.

WASHINGTON

But in 1974 Sen. Henry Jackson (D-WA) and Rep. Charles Vanik (D-OH) got Congress to deny both credits and most-favored-nation status to communist countries that restrict emigration. The act's sponsors were responding in part to Soviet reluctance to grant exit visas to Jews, but they were also trying to derail the Nixon-Kissinger detente policies. As a result of Jackson-Vanik, both trade and Jewish emigration, which had been steadily growing during the Nixon years, sharply declined.

During Jimmy Carter's administration, trade picked up again. But after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter clamped new restrictions on exports and imposed a grain embargo. The Reagan administration lifted the grain embargo in 1981, but imposed new restrictions on technology transfers. The restrictions had formerly applied to technology with direct military uses, but the Reagan administration extended them to technologies with "dual uses" like computers, and even to oil and gas drilling equipment. This sparked a heated confrontation in 1982 with Western Europe over the Soviet-European natural gas pipeline.

After the first summit between Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov, the Reagan administration began to ease restrictions on trade and to encourage joint business ventures with the Soviet Union. The Reagan administration removed the ban on exporting oil and gas drilling equipment and, as its

term ended, was negotiating a major grain deal and debating whether to remove the most onerous restrictions on the transfer of dual-use technology.

As matters now stand, the most important trade issue facing the Bush White House is what to do about Jackson-Vanik. The administration can waive the act on an annual basis for countries that it believes are permitting emigration, as it has done for Hungary and China. (In a discussion on emigration, China's Deng Xiaoping is reported to have asked Carter, "How many millions do you want?") Congress could also opt to repeal the act.

So far the act has had little effect on U.S.-Soviet trade. Under Jackson-Vanik, tariffs are imposed for value added to raw materials; tariffs double the prices of manufactured and refined products, but hardly affect the prices of raw materials. Most Soviet exports to the U.S. have been chemicals like ammonia and raw materials like rhodium and palladium; the Soviets would probably not have been able to sell their manufactured goods at any price above cost. But Jackson-Vanik discourages joint ventures aimed at eventually exporting manufactured goods to the U.S. and also rules out American government credits and loan guarantees.

In addition, the Bush administration has to decide whether to modify the restrictions on technology transfers and whether to approve the Soviet application for "observer

Reluctant to deal with Gorbachov on the broader issues, Washington is instead engaging in a tepid debate on slightly increasing commerce with the Kremlin.

status" at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 1986 the Reagan administration blocked Soviet observer status—a prelude to regular membership—on the ground that the USSR has a state-run economy. It ignored the fact that Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia—countries with similar economies—are GATT and IMF members.

Trilateral backing: The main proponents of trade liberalization are businesses looking to make a buck and foreign policy-makers who believe that liberalization is important to resolving broader differences with the Soviet Union.

For the last two decades, farmers, major grain exporters, engineering firms and oil companies like Armand Hammer's Occidental Petroleum have favored expanded trade with the Soviet Union. But Gorbachov's encouragement of foreign-owned joint ventures and his promise to create a convertible currency have won over a much broader group of American business leaders. In March the Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT), the main corporate trade lobby, issued a paper calling on the Bush administration to exempt the Soviet Union from Jackson-Vanik. ECAT also pledged to "work closely with the Congress in exploring other options for increasing trade with the Soviet Union."

The former government officials and investment bankers who belong to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) or the Trilateral Commission see trade as a means of integrating the Soviet Union into the world capitalist system. Over the last year the CFR's journal, *Foreign Affairs*, has regularly featured articles backing trade liberalization. In one piece published last fall titled "Bipartisan Objectives for American Foreign Policy," former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance expressed their "serious doubts" about Jackson-Vanik. In this spring's issue, former Sen. Adlai Stevenson (D-IL) and Alton Frye, the vice president of the Council on Foreign Relations, call for not merely waiving but repealing Jackson-Vanik.

Last month the Trilateral Commission issued a paper on "East-West Relations" written by Kissinger, former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone. They called on the West "to support, and perhaps to finance, those changes in the Soviet Union's economic structure that will make it more compatible with Western practices and values—provided the Soviet Union carries out a major reduction of its military expenditures and conducts a conciliatory foreign policy." The Trilateral paper advocated granting observer status to the Soviet Union in the IMF and GATT meetings.

Members of the foreign policy elite most often make a simple and irrefutable argument that improved trade is a part of improved overall relations. But some proponents of liberalization have argued that American trade concessions will dramatically and positively affect the fate of Gorbachov and *perestroika*. This argument, however, ignores the fact that European and Japanese firms can already provide most of the products and investments that the Soviet Union wants.

As Ed Hewett of the Brookings Institution told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,

Continued on page 10

By Diana Johnstone

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S INFLEXIBLY negative response to offers from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov and pleas from allies to negotiate reductions of short-range nuclear forces (SNFs) in Europe appears to be simple immobilism. But in a rapidly changing world, immobility also has an impact on the direction of events. And American inflexibility may especially contribute to eventual tragedy in Europe.

Britain and the U.S. claim that SNFs are necessary to make up for Soviet conventional superiority. But this posture loses credibility as the Soviet Union shows a willingness to accept drastic cuts at the May 29 Vienna talks on conventional forces in Europe.

In an April 12 meeting in East Berlin, the Warsaw Pact foreign ministers called for talks on reducing short-range nuclear forces. The offer is intended to complement the conventional arms negotiations. The idea is that rapid progress can be made at the Vienna talks toward balancing and reducing conventional forces, based on the principle of mutual elimination of threats of surprise attacks or large-scale offensive operations. But the principle of removing threats of blitzkrieg today extends beyond the conventional forces of 50 years ago. Tanks are not the only attack forces, nor necessarily the most effective.

A few days earlier in London, Gorbachov announced a Soviet decision to stop making the highly enriched uranium required for nuclear weapons production. Soviet commentators expressed surprise at the indifference of Washington officials to this concrete step toward shutting down nuclear weapons production.

West Germans and most other Europeans wish the U.S. would accept the offer. But the U.S. and Britain insist that "modernization" of NATO's short-range nuclear missiles must go ahead. This means replacing Lance missiles, whose range is 120 kilometers, with a new missile whose range is four times greater.

Underlying the internal NATO dispute over modernization is a crisis in the very meaning of the NATO alliance.

What is it for anyway? Theoretically, NATO is supposed to defend Western Europe from a Soviet military threat. The Warsaw Pact was created shortly after NATO to defend the Soviet bloc from the NATO threat. But now it appears to most people that the mass annihilation weapons piled up in these two "defensive" alliances themselves constitute the main threat.

Gorbachov has been the first world leader to break the cycle by publicly accepting the West's explanation for its arms buildup: fear of the Soviet threat. This leads to a simple conclusion: if the West is really only defending itself from the East, and the East is only defending itself from the West, then some arrangement more sensible, cheaper and less dangerous than a mutually ruinous nuclear arms race can surely be found. The solution lies in getting rid of all the potential attack weapons that frighten the other side.

Gorbachov has begun a historic process by taking the West at its word—by taking literally NATO statements of purely defensive intent. This means that West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's call on the Western Allies to "take Gorbachov at his word" is by no means a naive unilateral concession, but a symmetrical response. "Taking Gorbachov at his word" does not

No nukes is good nukes in NATO, if not Washington

mean "believing" Gorbachov, but taking him up on his offer. It means letting words be tested and the mutual disarmament process be continued if possible.

But Genscher and other Europeans also see dangerous consequences if the West does not respond by "taking Gorbachov at his word." NATO nuclear modernization

EUROPE

would discredit Gorbachov for having "taken the West at its word," casting serious doubt on the belief that the West had been arming only out of fear of a Soviet threat, since the arms buildup goes on despite offers to remove the threat, and even despite unilateral steps to do so.

If NATO is a purely defensive alliance, what happens when there is no longer an offensive enemy?

As British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was getting ready for her "raid" on West Germany, to lecture Chancellor Helmut Kohl on the need to modernize short-range

nuclear weapons, European newspapers were reporting U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney's predictions that Gorbachov will "fail" and be replaced by anti-Western hardliners. Cheney's remarks spotlighted the growing gap between Washington and Europe. Major historic changes are underway, but the only U.S. reaction is to keep on the alert for a return to the past.

A hidden agenda? Refusal now to negotiate mutual force reductions can only arouse suspicion that NATO wants to maintain the option of military intervention in a troubled Eastern Europe after the Soviet Union has unilaterally cut its own forces. Eastern Europe is evolving rapidly, however. Gorbachov has shown a willingness to let political factors guide the evolution. At this time, a NATO policy of strength can raise suspicions about its intentions.

Reluctance to go along with SNF modernization was first identified by the Anglo-American media as "Genscherism." When the national consensus being expressed by Genscher became impossible to ignore, columnists began digging up the ancestral flaws of "the Germans." Some people in and out of the Bush administration, starting with Richard Perle, a former assistant secretary of defense under Reagan, seem to yearn to have Germany back as national enemy.

As for other European NATO countries—

Italy, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Greece and Belgium—that largely agree with the Germans, their objections are habitually dismissed as mere flies buzzing in the boardroom.

Little Belgium is the seat of NATO headquarters and is located right in the middle of the Atlantic Alliance. According to a recent poll, public opinion there goes like this:

Do you feel militarily threatened by the Soviet Union? No, 86.3 percent. Do you think the Soviet Union is ready to continue to disarm? Yes, 59.8 percent. Do you think that American nuclear weapons in Belgium and Western Europe are still necessary for our security? No, 54.9 percent. Do you want to see all nuclear weapons removed from Europe? Yes, 66 percent. NATO wants to replace its short-range nuclear weapons in Europe. Are you for or against these new nuclear weapons? Against, 72.9 percent.

The Belgian government has taken the lead in opposing the replacement of Lance by a new missile with a much longer range—one that is barely under the 500 kilometer limit set by the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty signed by Gorbachov and Ronald Reagan. Belgian leaders believe that the 480-kilometer range of the "Follow On To Lance" championed by the Pentagon and Thatcher would violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the INF treaty.

The Belgian peace movement has been keeping a watch on its government, providing critical support for its stand. Last month 80,000 people marched through the streets of Brussels in opposition to missile modernization. The slogan "they're coming back ... and so are we!" indicated the sort of welcome Europe will give to the next round of NATO Euromissiles.

The Anglo-Americans have been impatiently brushing away the Belgian fly. British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe has openly declared that insisting on a chemical weapons ban and a conventional agreement before opening tactical nuclear negotiations is a way to prevent tactical nuclear negotiations from ever happening.

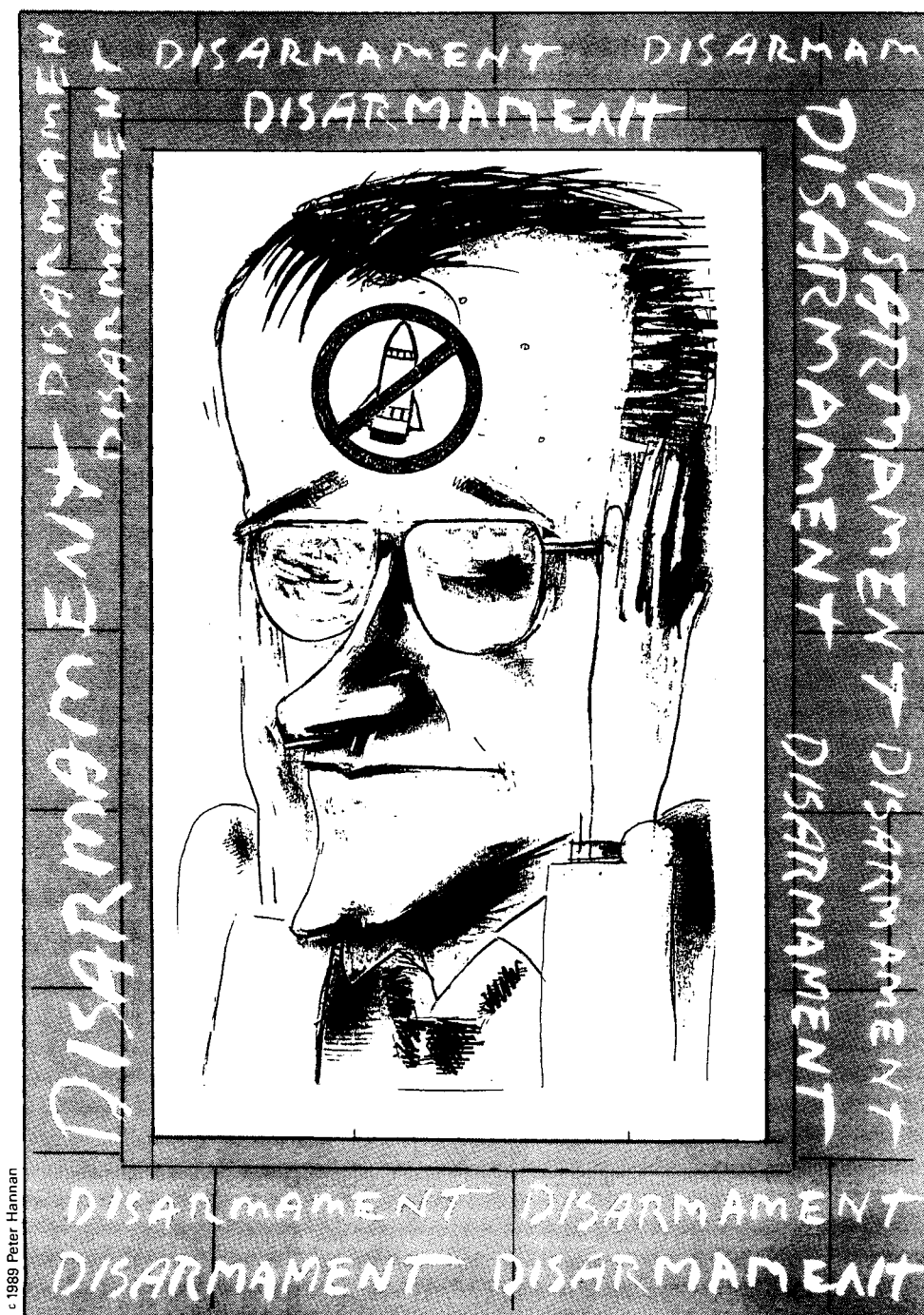
But Belgians and other Europeans realize that stonewalling on the nuclear missiles also means blocking progress in reaching conventional disarmament.

The Italian fly is also buzzing. Italy has theoretically agreed to let the U.S. set up a new base at Crotone in southern Italy for the F-16 fighter bombers the U.S. Air Force must relocate from Spain under terms agreed to by NATO. The move goes contrary to threat build-down in that it would bring nuclear-capable F-16s closer to potential targets in Eastern Europe. On April 28 the Italian Senate passed a resolution calling for East-West negotiations to "make it unnecessary to transfer the F-16s to Crotone." The motion blocked expropriation of land for the new base at Crotone.

Lots of new weapons are required to maintain the old NATO doctrine of "flexible response," as well as the new U.S. military-industrial complex doctrine called "competitive strategies." The idea is to outdo the Soviet adversary with new weapons systems using technology in which the U.S. has the edge—in short, a new arms race centering on sophisticated electronics.

If the Bush administration's lethargy has any long-range purpose, it seems designed to provoke a revival of the German nationalist right in reaction to bullying from NATO allies. Such are the ironies of history that a sense of grievance against the West could turn into aggression against the East.

Continued on page 10



Soviet trade

Continued from page 8

tee, "Our policy of denial serves primarily to deny business to U.S. firms; it does little to deny the Soviets access to the credits or goods they wish to obtain."

Gorbachov as Lenin: Hard-line conservatives make a similar mistake: they oppose trade liberalization on the grounds that it will make the Soviet Union economically viable and therefore enhance its status as a rival superpower. A Heritage Foundation report last August warned that U.S.-Soviet joint ventures (which presently total only 40) "actually increase the threat to the West by creating an economically stronger and more dynamic adversary."

Appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Lawrence Brady, former Commerce Department official in the Reagan administration, argued that the Soviet Union was using political "giveaways" in order to "acquire the economic, financial, and technological assistance and know-how desperately needed to save the Soviet system." Brady drew an analogy between Gorbachov's *perestroika* and Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), implying that just as Lenin's NEP laid the basis for Stalinism, Gorbachov's *perestroika* would make possible a new phase of Soviet international aggression. "Gorbachov can be characterized as more Leninist than any leader since the Stalin period," Brady told the incredulous committee members.

Some conservatives argue that the U.S. should withhold trade in order to further Soviet economic decline, which, they argue, will bring on further democratization. Judy

Shelton, a researcher from the Hoover Institution, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "the more economic pressure [from the West], the more pluralism [in the Soviet Union]. When things get desperate, that is when you are able to implement democratic reforms." But these conservatives appear entirely unaware of how fascism came to Italy and Germany between the world wars.

A few Democratic moderates are inexplicably reinforcing these conservative assaults against improved relations with the Soviet Union. For two years Sen. Bill Bradley (D-NJ), a leading Democratic presidential hopeful for 1992, has been warning against providing "preferential credit terms, government loans or other government guarantees" to the Soviet Union.

"It would be a tragic mistake if the level of, and conditions for, resources from Western depositors, shareholders and taxpayers allow Soviet conservatives to avoid the choice between guns and butter," Bradley wrote last November in *The Wall Street Journal*.

His repeated warnings are misleadingly couched in terms that comfort conservative hard-liners but concede nothing to their actual arguments. In fact, Bradley has been arguing against proposals that no one is presently making. On all the relevant issues, from Jackson-Vanik to observer status at GATT and IMF, Bradley leans toward the corporate and foreign policy elite's alternatives. He appears to be positioning himself politically rather than advancing actual programs at variance with the Bush administration or Democratic liberals.

Waiving Jackson-Vanik: Afraid of con-

servative opposition, Bush took several months to approve wheat exports to the Soviet Union. As with the recent bipartisan contra deal, he tried to create a situation in which he appeared to be bowing to outside pressure, but this time from members of his own party. Last month Bush administration officials told the media that with the Cabinet deadlocked on the issue, the president would consult congressional leaders. After consulting with Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-KN), an outspoken proponent of the wheat deal, Bush reportedly gave in and approved it.

The president will probably try to follow a similar script in granting the Soviet Union a waiver on Jackson-Vanik, but here he will await the advice of Jewish organizations. With Jewish emigration at a ten-year high, major Jewish organizations are leaning toward recommending that Bush waive Jackson-Vanik. According to Larry Cohler, who follows this issue for *Washington Jewish Week*, a delegation from the National Conference on Soviet Jewry went to Moscow last week to iron out a final agreement on emigration. Vanik himself, now a Washington lawyer, has come out for a waiver.

If Bush does waive Jackson-Vanik, it will help a few businesses here and in the Soviet Union, but more importantly it will improve the climate for arms negotiations. They promise both peace and prosperity by reducing the threat of war and by releasing both the Soviet Union and the U.S. from economically crippling military expenditures. For the president, arms negotiations are the path of greater conservative resistance, but they are also the path of greater promise to Americans. □

NATO

Continued from page 9

Some sorcerer's apprentices might figure that a Germany tired of being ignored by Bush and nagged by Thatcher could decide that it needs its own nuclear deterrent. They might also figure that Moscow would look the other way, viewing it as an anti-Western step. The only West Germans who want nuclear weapons, however, are those thinking in terms of recovering Germany's lost Eastern territories. If the Soviets weren't fooled—which seems likelier—a nuclear West Germany would be the best way to provoke Gorbachov's overthrow by leaders ready to sacrifice everything to defense of the Soviet homeland. For right-wing strategists, the next best thing to a restoration of the czar would be restoration of the Soviet threat.

British policy has traditionally been to keep the European continent divided, by war if necessary. The current Anglo-American stance is disturbingly traditional.

On April 28 West Germany's parliament debated the modernization issue. Genscher, just back from being snubbed by Bush, was applauded by both sides of the parliament when he declared: "Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come. It is the idea of the decline of enemy images in international relations. The idea of the demilitarization of East-West relations. The idea of freeing them from ideology."

Indeed, the end of "enemy images" or "enemy stereotypes" seems to be an idea whose time has come in West Germany. But one gets the disturbing impression that the American response might be to switch the enemy image back onto the Germans. □

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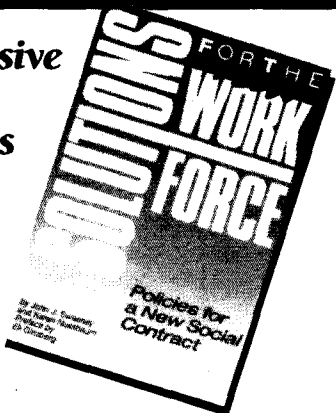
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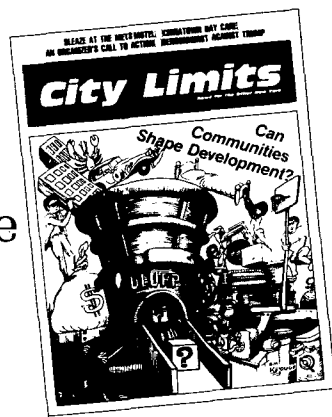
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By William Gasperini

HAVANA

EACH DAY IN HAVANA'S CENTRAL VEDADO DISTRICT young people gather at a popular teahouse known as *La Casa de las Infusiones*. But tea, coffee and small pastries are not the only "infusions" they find there.

For many young Cubans the teahouse has become—along with the better-known Coppelia Ice Cream complex several blocks away—a center for what can be termed an alternative Cuban culture.

People talk poetry, exchange foreign literature and plan experimental theater. Mostly in their early 20s, some of these young people have steady work in the arts, while others hold odd jobs as they aspire to the positions they really want—not unlike young people in a similar situation anywhere.

What they have in common, however, is a certain detachment from Cuba's "official" culture promoted by the Communist Party along lines considered politically correct.

Not that they reject officialdom, given the political realities. Nelson, for example, is now starring in his second feature film in the state-run cinema. Rene is between jobs at publishing houses. Bruno has several books to his name, while Javier is a journalist at *Trabajadores*, the newspaper widely considered to be the most independent of Cuba's tightly controlled press.

Yet for these members of the second or third generation born in postrevolutionary Cuba, many elements in the system clearly need changing. And they look abroad, less often talking of Cuban artists than of Allen Ginsberg, Janis Joplin and Pink Floyd. Some have spent months hitchhiking around the country, while others have even lived in makeshift "crash pads" to escape their parents' homes—where most young people are forced to live due to the tight housing crunch.

Many sport long hair and wear earrings and necklaces they craft themselves. Some occasionally use marijuana, although any real "drug problem" is negligible due not only to strict police controls but prohibitive costs. Despite indulging in such alternative practices, they say they do not dispute the gains of Fidel Castro's revolution or the underlying premises of the socialism the Cuban leader is trying to construct.

"People may disagree with certain aspects of our reality that need changing, such as a freer press," says one aspiring journalist in the teahouse. "No one would do away with the essence of socialism, which is irreversible. It's just that free education, health care and new housing are not the only things in life."

Rectifying reality: Even the Cuban government seems to feel the need for change. Since the Third Communist Party Congress in 1986, the government has allowed the usually staid press to make some criticisms of the Cuban status quo. It's part of a government policy called "rectification"—the process of correcting past errors.

But while rectification may sound like the Soviet process of reform embodied by *perestroika* and *glasnost*, observers say the winds of change in Cuba do not blow nearly as hard as those in the Soviet Union—and do not blow in the same direction.

Cuban and Soviet reforms "are really two totally different things, as the Cubans themselves are fond of saying," says a Western diplomat in Havana. "With one you have essential restructuring of an outdated political system. With the other you have certain

Perestroika – nyet; "rectification" – si



Fidel Castro and Mikhail Gorbachev in Havana: arm and arm but not eye to eye.

changes, primarily of an economic nature, but which do not alter the fundamental power structure."

Lazaro Medina, vice president of the Union of Cuban Journalists, agrees that rectification is not about fundamental changes in the political system. "We see the need to examine past attitudes and decisions that have been wrong, by doing away with the 'mystery syndrome' of hoping problems will go away by ignoring them," he says. "We can criticize, but it must be revolutionary criticism, that which will not damage the revolution, but will improve and defend it." He displays clips of his own articles—published in *Granma* and *Juventud Rebelde*, the two largest national papers—that question such things as attitudes in the workplace.

In one piece entitled "Are we true revolutionaries?" Medina writes, "In many workplaces we see slogans with phrases from Fidel, calls to be more combative, etc. Problems have been analyzed since the Third Party Congress, but we have yet to see results because of weakness in the struggle against these imperfections."

But many young people say this sort of criticism is too confined. "Rectification is like a wash; you clean off some of the dirt, but everything underneath remains," says a young person in the teahouse. "It's fine to criticize, but why should we have to wait until long after the errors have been committed to raise questions?"

Cuba—love it or leave it: To other young people involved in Cuba's myriad mass organizations, such as the Communist Youth, such attitudes constitute heresy.

"These people don't know what they have, the gains that have happened at great sacrifice," said Roxana Corbalan, 17, a member of

"No one would do away with the essence of socialism, which is irreversible. It's just that free education, health care and new housing are not the only things in life."

the Communist Youth. "They are just 'lumpen' who should leave if all they can do is sit around complaining and wishing they could be famous writers."

Young people such as Corbalan fit well into the system, where rewards are earned through extra hours of volunteer work, attitude on the job or commitment in the defense militias.

According to officials, rectification is primarily a means of effecting economic changes such as greater productivity. "It is

the process of restoring the true value of a worker's labor to his productive output," says Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, a Politburo member. Another official explains rectification as a means of correcting an outdated system that actually rewarded waste instead of efficiency.

"For example, train or bus operators actually used to earn more for taking more time than needed on a trip. There was no need for efficiency," says the journalist Medina. "We were actually paying for inefficiency, and this occurred in agriculture, industrial enterprises, throughout the economy."

Another highly publicized change under rectification is the elimination of small private food markets that, while increasing availability of certain foodstuffs, also created that bogeyman of capitalism—the middleman. "Soon the farmers themselves were not bringing their goods to market, as others took advantage and reaped rewards without contributing real labor," says Medina. "That's when Fidel, in consultation with the party, decided it had to be stopped."

No puppet show: Government officials usually cite rectification in defense of criticism that Cuba remains unyielding despite the changes underway in Mikhail Gorbachev's Soviet Union. And the Soviet leader's visit to Havana last month proved a catalyst in discussions over the subject.

Gorbachev arrived in Cuba amid intense media speculation that he would somehow pressure Castro into making new changes in the island nation. Commentators also conjectured that the charismatic leader from Moscow would announce dramatic new policy initiatives, perhaps by threatening to cut back economic assistance to Cuba.

None of this materialized, as both Castro and Gorbachev reaffirmed the "unshakeable" bonds of friendship and trade uniting the two countries. During the enthusiastic welcoming motorcade into Havana, signs and posters hailed thanks for 30 years of vital support—but made no mention of *perestroika*. Yet many Cubans still saw the visit as something more than merely expressing thanks.

"People are very interested in *perestroika* and *glasnost*," says Jose Pais, who writes poetry while working occasionally in construction. "It's not that these things can or should be transplanted here, because our reality is very different. But certain elements could well be applied."

Copies of *Moscow News* and *New Times*, the Soviet foreign-language daily and news-weekly respectively, are eagerly sought out whenever Cubans can find them. Both are the most independent publications of the Soviet press and give thorough coverage of Gorbachev's reforms—to the point where Castro has even termed *Moscow News* as being "counterrevolutionary."

But the net result of Gorbachev's visit seemed, if anything, to solidify the Cuban desire to do things their own way. Government officials also seemed chagrined about all the speculation that the Kremlin leader was coming to slap Castro's hand.

"For 30 years our adversaries have said we are a Soviet puppet, that we do only what Moscow dictates," says Jorge Mendez, Foreign Ministry press attache. "Now that we affirm our right to carry on with our own program, our own strategy for building socialism, they accuse us of being obstinate. We can never win, but we don't care; it's never mattered that much what they think." □

William Gasperini writes regularly on Latin America.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 17-23, 1989 11

By Arthur R. Kroeber

PAKISTAN'S LATEST EXPERIMENT WITH democracy is working—up to a point. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's five-month-old government has consolidated its hold on the country, and the opposition parties, after some initial grumbling, have accepted their status. More importantly, there is little evidence that the army wants to re-enter politics.

Bhutto has moved cautiously. She still lacks the confidence to tackle the country's two most pressing needs: a new, more moderate policy on Afghanistan aimed at returning three million civil war refugees to their homeland, and a major overhaul of Pakistan's unhealthy economy.

Bhutto is walking a tightrope. If she asserts her authority too quickly she risks a backlash from the military and bureaucratic elite that grew accustomed to running the country during the 11-year rule of the late Mohammed Zia ul-Haq. But if she doesn't forge a strong government, she might precipitate the kind of economic and political instability that twice led the Pakistani army to oust civilian rulers.

The problem for Bhutto is that last November's election was a mandate for democracy, but not for any political party. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won 93 of 207 directly elected national assembly seats, with 38.7 percent of the vote. The eight-party Islamic Democratic Alliance—whose main constituents are the fundamentalist *Jama'at-e-Islami* (Congregation of Islam) and the secular Pakistan Moslem League—won 55 seats and 30.6 percent of the popular vote. The PPP's parliamentary majority depends on support from various independents and the 13-seat bloc of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement, a party of those who migrated to Pakistan from India in 1947 and afterwards.

Pakistan's four state governments are equally divided between the PPP and the Islamic Alliance. The PPP controls the troubled Sind province and leads a coalition in the Northwest Frontier province. The Alliance shares power in Baluchistan and rules Punjab—which, with 60 percent of the population, is the largest and most important state.

This alignment has created a virtual standoff between Bhutto's government in Islamabad and the Punjab government of Nawaz Sharif, a canny Zia protégé who was the only major figure of the old regime to emerge from the election with his status enhanced. Should Bhutto's government fall, Sharif would be a leading candidate for prime minister.

Piety politics: Although the election was widely interpreted as a repudiation of Zia and his policy of "Islamization," the religious parties actually did very well and have moved quickly to establish their influence. To some extent this is inevitable. Pakistan, like Israel, was founded as a homeland for members of a particular religious community, and so the argument that the state should submit to religious law will always attract a loud and important, though numerically small, following.

In November the fundamentalist *Jama'at-e-Islami*—which supported Zia's Islamization and many of whose members held government posts—won seven seats. The *Jamiat-e-ulema-e-Islam* (Party of Islamic Clergy), a more moderate group, won eight seats. By contrast, in the 1970 elections (the

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Pakistan:



Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto: democracy or dynasty?

another try at democracy

last whose results were generally accepted) religious parties won only 11 out of 300 seats.

Although there's little chance for an Iranian-style theocracy to take hold in Pakistan (Zia's much-touted Islamization was more on

paper than in fact), the religious parties' strength outweighs their numbers because they are tightly organized, ideologically committed and vocal. Conservative Moslem leaders first tried to undermine Bhutto by claiming that Islam does not permit a woman

to be head of state. Bhutto, who has proven adept at using religious symbolism to her own advantage, crushed that argument by making an off-season pilgrimage to Mecca in mid-January. The warm welcome given her by the Saudi Arabian government—the guardian of Sunni orthodoxy—cemented her legitimacy.

The next month, though, religious leaders took advantage of the controversy over Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* to expose the government's tenuous ability to maintain order. In mid-February about 200 demonstrators attacked the American Center in Islamabad to protest the publication of the book in the U.S., causing \$50,000 in damage. The police at first failed to react to the protest and then panicked, firing into the crowd and killing seven.

The incident was a major embarrassment for the PPP and underscored a central point: religion becomes an important and potentially dangerous issue in Pakistan when the government is weak and unable to set its own priorities.

Looking for followers: In order to reduce the influence of religious parties and give the PPP greater authority, Bhutto has to find a new constituency. One reason democracy hasn't worked in Pakistan is that all politicians basically represent one class: the landed aristocracy, along with a tiny Westernized elite in Karachi and Lahore. Politics has traditionally been a byzantine battle of shifting factions in which the only loyalty is to power.

Bhutto's father Zulfikar, who ruled from 1971 to 1977, tried to get around this by advancing a quasi-socialist populism. But he alienated the business interests he needed as financiers and political allies by his inept nationalization of many industries and increased governmental regulation of the economy.

Bhutto already controls a large segment of the rural peasant vote. In order to get around the entrenched interests of the large landowners (of whom she is one), she needs to woo back the business class. To do this she must cut the fast-growing budget deficit, which hit \$3.2 billion in fiscal year 1987-88 and has stunted private business growth by monopolizing the credit market.

Unfortunately, the two best ways to cut the deficit would be to slash military spending—currently about 25 percent of government expenditure—and to tax agricultural income for the first time. In the short run, Bhutto may not be able to afford antagonizing the landlords and the army, which are the two strongest political forces in Pakistan today.

But in the long run, Pakistani democracy depends on some leader doing just that. Yet so far, aside from referring vaguely to her advocacy of "a Moslem form of social democracy," Bhutto has articulated no economic program.

Instead, the theme of her government, as of her campaign, has been the restoration of democracy. She announced in early January that all political prisoners had been released. Now she would like to eliminate all the additions Zia made to the constitution her father installed in 1973.

Political debate has focused on the proposed repeal of the eighth amendment. That amendment, passed just before Zia lifted the eight-year-old martial law in 1985, made its administrators immune to prosecution for any of their actions and made all martial law ordinances binding legislation. It also proclaimed Zia as president for five years and

gave him the power to choose not only a prime minister but also the leaders of the armed forces, and to dissolve both the national and the state legislatures almost at will.

The current president, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has shown no inclination to exercise his power over the national and state assemblies. Bhutto, nevertheless, believes that until the presidency is restricted and the legislatures are made immune to capricious dissolution, full democracy will not exist in Pakistan.

However, the repeal of a constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority in the national assembly, which Bhutto does not command. The opposition Islamic Democratic Alliance, whose eight constituent parties also campaigned against the eighth amendment, now finds it expedient to oppose the PPP on the issue, and it is unlikely that Bhutto will be able to muster the votes for repeal any time soon.

Repeal of the eighth amendment is probably a necessary step toward control of foreign policy, which the government now lacks. When Bhutto became prime minister she agreed to retain Zia's foreign minister, Yaqub Khan, thereby foregoing the right to establish her own agenda. In any event, control of Afghanistan policy—Pakistan's most immediate external concern—is largely in the hands of others: Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the country's spy agency, and the Americans.

Major strategic decisions require at least the tacit consent of American Ambassador to Pakistan Robert Oakley. Oakley reportedly was present at a meeting in early March when Bhutto ordered ISI to participate in a mujahedin siege of Jalalabad, which is still going on. The incident illustrated Bhutto's limited maneuvering room. The only way she could sway ISI, which opposed the attack, was to invoke the support of the U.S. and of the Pakistani army. Bhutto can play one side against another, but still isn't in a position to dictate her own policy.

ISI believes—and Bhutto apparently agrees—that the best outcome of the Afghan civil war for Pakistan is a mujahedin government led by a fundamentalist such as Gulbadin Hekmatyar, who was Zia ul-Haq's personal favorite. Both ISI and U.S. intelligence analysts predicted a quick victory for the mujahedin after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Two scenarios: The problem with such a stance is that the mujahedin are too fragmented ever to form a stable Afghan government. Months after the withdrawal of Soviet troops on February 15 it isn't even clear that the rebels can oust the Soviet-backed Najibullah regime from its strongholds of Jalalabad and Kabul. And even if Najibullah's government falls, as most Western observers expect, the mujahedin groups are less likely to negotiate a deal than to vie among themselves for control of the country.

At best, Afghanistan could revert to political fragmentation, with an ineffectual government in Kabul and various local chieftains holding sway in the countryside. At worst, it could become a second Lebanon and descend into permanent civil war.

The issue is critical for Pakistan, because it shelters three million Afghan refugees who won't go home until they're assured of peace. The Afghan refugees are blamed for dealing drugs and guns in Pakistan, thereby contributing to social unrest.

On one score Bhutto can rest easy: despite their disdain for her father and long-lasting support for Zia, Washington, D.C., policy-

makers agree that a strong Bhutto government should be supported. The Bush administration is clearly prepared to keep alive the current six-year, \$4 billion military and economic aid package for Pakistan, even though the ostensible reason for that aid—the Soviet presence in Afghanistan—is no longer valid.

Testifying before a House foreign affairs subcommittee in early March, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Howard Shaffer argued that continued U.S. aid was essential to the region's balance of power. "An effective defense capability is a prerequisite for maintaining good relations with neighboring countries and for negotiating fair agreements for peace and cooperation," he said. "A Pakistan that feels strong and self-confi-

dent is in a better position to pursue good relations with India." Such reasoning suggests that Washington will continue to aid Pakistan—though perhaps less generously—even beyond 1992, when the current package runs out.

Congress could cut off aid as early as April 1990 by refusing to renew Pakistan's waiver of the Symington Amendment, which prohibits U.S. aid to countries actively developing nuclear weapons. Bhutto has reiterated several times since assuming power that Pakistan's nuclear program is purely for peaceful purposes. Moreover, Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY), who heads the House foreign affairs subcommittee on Asia, returned from a week-long tour of the subcontinent in January convinced that a sudden cutoff of aid

would jeopardize Bhutto's government and reduce the hope for a stable democracy in Pakistan.

The trap that Pakistanis, the U.S. Congress and State Department and Bhutto herself must avoid is the belief that a PPP government and democracy are the same thing. That was what Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came to believe. As a result, he tried to rig elections in 1977 and thereby brought on martial law.

The division of power between Bhutto and the Islamic Alliance may frustrate hopes of decisive economic and social reform in the near future, but it marks an important shift from the authoritarianism—both populist and military—of the past three decades. □

Arthur R. Kroeber writes regularly for *In These Times* on Asia and the South Pacific.

'Daughter of Destiny' Benazir Bhutto—her start belongs to daddy

"Benazir" in Urdu means "unique," and Benazir Bhutto's status as the female ruler of a Moslem country is not only singular but improbable. How could a 35-year-old woman, educated at Harvard and Oxford, who speaks English better than she does her national language, become the elected leader of a poor Moslem country like Pakistan? Yet Bhutto's sudden rise to power is not all that surprising.

She exemplifies a common South Asian political pattern in which the wife or daughter of a charismatic male leader rises to power after his death. Indira Gandhi, daughter of Nehru, was the most famous and successful of these. Former Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike got her start in the '50s when her prime minister husband was assassinated. The leaders of Bangladesh's main opposition factions today are the daughter and widow of two murdered national leaders.

Throughout South Asia, despite the existence of democratic forms, the right to rule is still more inherited than earned. In this matter sex is no bar. Much was made in the West of Bhutto's uniqueness as a female Islamic leader. Pakistan's fundamentalists fulminated, but a majority of Pakistanis see her as the most "natural" leader of their country because of her lineage.

It runs in the family: Benazir inherited more from her father than the habit of authority. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who ruled Pakistan from 1971 to 1977, when his army chief of staff Mohammed Zia ul-Haq deposed him, was brilliant, charismatic, arrogant and authoritarian. All those adjectives apply equally to Benazir. The prism of politics refracts everything in her life, down to the most personal of relationships. Her 1987 marriage to wealthy landowner Asif Zardari, for example, was arranged by the two families so she could continue her career without being hampered by gossip or criticism of her Western lifestyle.

In her autobiography, *Daughter of Destiny*, she writes, "An arranged marriage was the price in personal choice I had to pay for the political path my life had taken."

She admits she took great pains to conceal the date her first child was expected on the assumption that Zia would schedule the 1988 elections to coincide with the delivery. (He did, but fate defeated him twice. His intelligence operatives got the date wrong, and Bhutto's



child, Bilawal Zardari, was born five weeks premature.)

The differences between the two Bhuttos are as important as the similarities. The most crucial difference is their attitude toward the Americans. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto distanced Pakistan from the U.S. and courted the Arab world. He hosted an Islamic summit in 1974 and so antagonized the U.S. by his pursuit of nuclear weapons that President Jimmy Carter cut off aid to Pakistan in 1977. Benazir Bhutto has close ties to the U.S., both personally and politically. One of her best friends from college days is Peter Galbraith, chief of staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. She is also on good terms with the influential Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY), chairman of the House foreign affairs subcommittee on Asia. Bhutto's frequent visits to the American ambassador after Zia dissolved the government last May caused considerable consternation among Pakistanis who would like to see their country become more independent.

Another difference between the two Bhuttos is that Zulfikar had nothing to worship but his own power; Benazir has her father.

The first half of her book is a paean to the man who taught her the facts of political life on his knee. When it comes to her father, Benazir suspends the fine practical intelligence she usually exhibits. Zulfikar was "a martyr and a saint," a politician who never made a mistake except in trusting Zia. He was a visionary democratic socialist undone by a cabal of capitalists, landlords and fundamentalists, "small, provincial men whose myopic views had failed Pakistan in the past and would again in the future."

This blindness stems, in part, from Benazir's absence from Pakistan during her father's rule. After an idyllic childhood spent in the Bhutto family's large estates and houses, Benazir left for Harvard in 1969 at age 16. She then pursued a second bachelor's degree at Oxford, becoming president of the Oxford Union debating society, and returning to Karachi just 11

days before her father was ousted. It was easy for her to dismiss the jailings of political opponents, the harassment of news media and the increasing economic confusion that marked those years.

Fortuitous demise: She spent most of the seven years following her return in jail or under house arrest, finally gaining permission to leave for treatment of a serious ear infection in 1984. Two years later she was back, apparently believing she could lead a popular movement to unseat Zia. But after an enthusiastic welcome, the mundane details of political organization stymied her, and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP)—whose leadership she had assumed as a birthright, without debate or election, after her father's execution in 1979—floundered. Until Zia's death in a still-unexplained plane crash last August, observers did not rate highly the opposition's chances of toppling him, and the main reason was Bhutto's inability to hold the PPP together.

"She's done a piss-poor job of running her party," remarked a Western diplomat last July, noting that she routinely snubbed veteran party members and rarely consulted anyone outside her tight inner circle when making decisions.

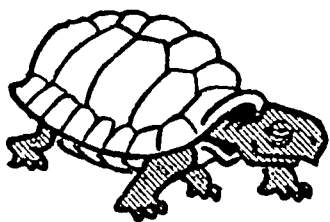
Zia's death was her golden opportunity, however. She infuriated many loyal PPP supporters, some of whom had gone to prison, by denying them candidacies for last November's elections in favor of latecomers from Pakistan's landed aristocracy. And she alienated the more ideological elements by letting the PPP's traditional commitment to socialism and nationalization of industry vanish so she could garner the support of a suspicious U.S., which her father had antagonized.

The polls vindicated her strategy. Now she faces the task of moving beyond the slogans of "restoration of democracy" and *Bhutto Shaheed* (Bhutto the martyr) and creating a vision of what Pakistani society should be and how it can solve its intractable economic problems. She has mastered the grand political gesture—whether it be a pilgrimage to Mecca to short-circuit fundamentalist criticism or the birthday party for her father in January, at which she cut a 2,000-pound cake.

But she appears to have no ideology and no policies, only a legacy of authority. She has yet to prove she can use that authority to benefit the nation as well as herself.

—A.R.K.

EDITORIAL



SLOW



SLOWER



SLOWEST

It's time to consider taking control of our common heritage

While Exxon continues to demonstrate its incompetence and disregard for the environment and the people of Alaska, its profits—along with those of the entire oil industry—are soaring. The excuse for the surging price of gasoline that the public has been forced to pay since March is that the *Exxon Valdez* accident cut into already tight crude oil supplies. Taking advantage of this situation, oil companies have done so well that second-quarter profits for the industry are expected to reach a record high.

There is something obscene in all of this, though industry analysts consider it simply the workings of the market. Tight supply plus continued high demand equals rising prices, they say—and the public be damned. And to add insult to injury, Exxon has dragged its corporate feet in cleaning up the mess it created and then lied about

how well it is doing. The company claims that 70 percent of the spilled oil has been recovered, evaporated or dissipated, but Alaska's Environmental Conservation Commissioner told a congressional hearing last week that the company had only half the number of people and equipment needed to handle the spill and that its claims were grossly exaggerated. He called Exxon's cleanup plan "the biggest piece of American maritime fiction since *Moby Dick*."

The public outrage in Alaska has been strong enough to force the state Senate finally to pass a law eliminating a tax break for the state's two largest oil fields, at Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk, both on the North Slope. There's no doubt, said Alaska Governor Steve Cowper, that the spill changed the political atmosphere—and the ability of the oil companies to control the state legislature. But tax increases and the greater regulation of the industry being proposed in Congress are not really enough. Oil, after all, is a natural resource—god-given, so to speak. Logically it should belong to all the people, just as water does. To allow corporations whose primary concern is profit maximization to benefit from a scarce natural resource—and doubly from their own mistakes—makes no sense. These resources belong to the nation. We should all benefit equally from them.

Sound and fury over a straying Latin dictator

The fraudulent election in Panama has George Bush all excited. He thinks he finally has an antagonist small and unpopular enough for him to intimidate. This stolen election, because it has publicly been related to the drug trade and because Noriega has made noises about moving off the reservation, has been the occasion for a full-court press of indignation.

But how concerned are Bush, former President Jimmy Carter and all our other stalwart leaders about a little election fraud? Only last

year, in Mexico, our immediate neighbor to the south and, with 70 million people, a nation many times larger and more important than Panama, the presidential election was stolen just as openly and scandalously. No one seriously suggested that Carlos Salinas de Gotari had gotten more votes than Cuauhtemoc Cardenas. Everyone knew that the Institutional Party of the Revolution, which has been in office ever since it was formed 60 years ago, had stolen the election. But the Reagan administration did not lift a finger, George Bush did not open his mouth and Jimmy Carter didn't stray from his peanut farm. Could it be that they didn't because Cardenas represented the left and Salinas could be counted on to remain loyal to the empire? Could it be that commitment to democracy is not really the operative principle in our government's actions?

Bush is throwing money at the wrong problems

George Bush, the "education president," has started his administration by educating the American people on what he means by a "kinder and gentler America." Not surprisingly, it turns out that Bush is considerably kinder and gentler to his fellow government officials and to the corporations whose profits depend on massive military spending than he is to the children of our nation whose schools are in crisis. To get better administrators, judges and legislators, administration leaders have argued, Congress should agree to substantial pay increases for their own members and those of the executive and judicial branches. This is necessary, they say, in order to compete with the private sector for the best people. Similarly, the administration believes that to defend our nation it is necessary to throw hundreds of billions of dollars at the military-industrial complex.

But the public schools are, for them, a different matter. Bush's secretary of education, Lauro F. Cavazos, announced two weeks ago that money is not the answer to the crisis. According to Cavazos, the

problem is "mediocrity," which presumably occurs because of a moral failing on the part of teachers and school administrators. No need here to pay salaries that are competitive with the private sector, or to invest in plant and equipment. The fact that public schools in inner cities all over the nation can't afford to purchase schoolbooks and that students have to sell cookies just to buy the basic tools of a rudimentary education is obviously not a matter of money to Cavazos and Bush.

Nor do they seem to think that the true defense of the nation lies in an educated populace, a people equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead productive and meaningful lives. But anyone with half a brain knows that quality education requires investment in pre-school programs, schools that provide a comfortable environment, well-trained teachers, small classes and a diversity of cultural and extracurricular activities—and all of this requires money.

An educated citizenry would do a lot more to improve the quality of our public servants in all branches of government than would throwing money at them. And our nation would be a lot stronger and more secure if we invested in schools and educators than it will be if we continue to squander money for the benefit of Bush's corporate buddies in the arms trade.

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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LETTERS

Chlorofluorocarbons

I AM WRITING TO CLEAR UP SOME INACCURACIES IN a recent column item ("In Short," *ITT*, March 29). You wrote that polystyrene foam food-service packaging is manufactured using chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which have been shown to deplete the ozone layer. In fact, the polystyrene industry made a voluntary agreement with several environmental organizations in April 1988 to phase out the use of CFCs in polystyrene food-service products by the end of 1988, and in February of this year announced that the industry had made good on its commitment.

Your readers will also be interested to know that the polystyrene manufacturing industry is taking quick steps to help resolve the increasing solid waste problems by recycling polystyrene. We believe that the answer to the solid waste crisis lies in increased efforts to recycle—not just polystyrene, but any material that is technologically and economically recyclable. To that end, the industry has started three pilot recycling projects. One of these—Polystyrene Recycling Inc.—will as of June 1 be collecting post-consumer wastes at 20 McDonald's restaurants in the New York City area for recycling. The recycled polystyrene will be used in building products. There are many other uses for recycled polystyrene, including videocassette cases and insulation.

Incidentally, I would also like to correct your use of the term "styrofoam." Styrofoam (TM) is a trademark name, much the same as Kleenex (TM) is the trademark name of one brand of facial tissue. The correct term is polystyrene foam.

Jerry Johnson
Executive Director, Polystyrene Packing Council
Washington, D.C.

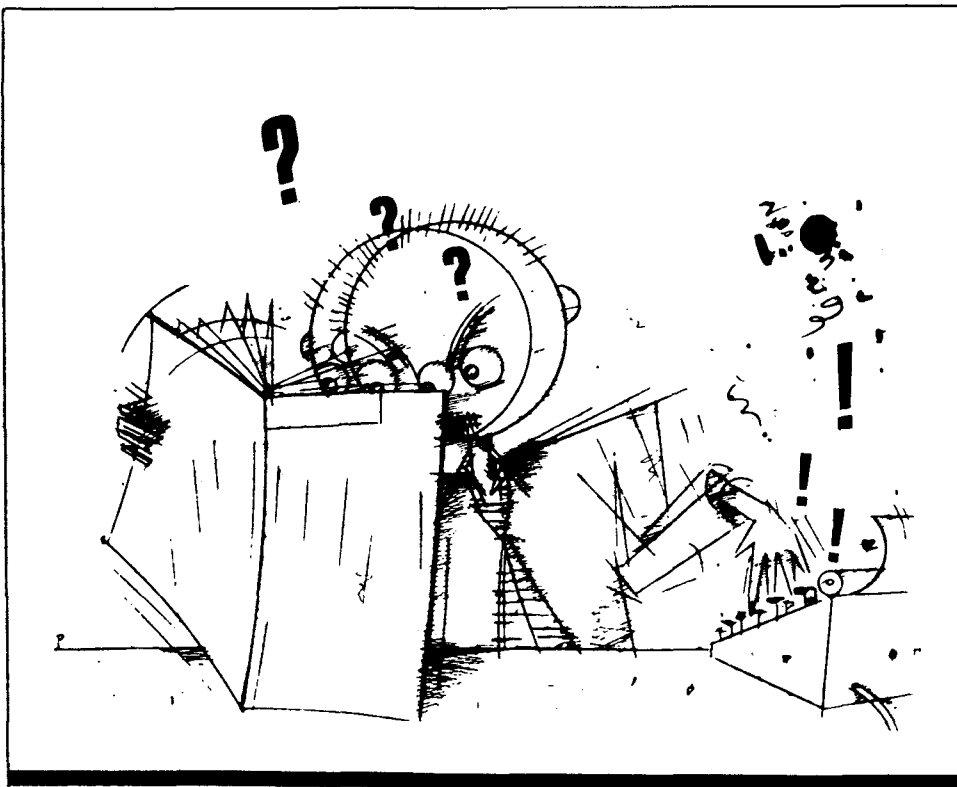
Joel Bleifuss replies: Johnson is correct; in February most makers of polystyrene phased out the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). But, depending on the company, they do use pentane, butane or hydrochlorofluorocarbon 22 (HCFC 22) as alternative "puffing agents." The release of pentane and butane into the atmosphere creates smog. And, as Johnson fails to mention, the commonly used HCFC 22 is only 5 percent less harmful to the endangered ozone layer than CFCs. As for recycling polystyrene, recycling only gives a bad product a second life. It doesn't get rid of the problem at the front end—which is the creation of toxic waste. Among the chemicals produced in the U.S., polystyrene production creates the fifth-largest amount of toxic waste.

Fishy

WHAT A SPLENDID IDEA—SENDING A FISH TO THE chairman of Exxon ("In Short," April 26). Of course, Lawrence Rawl will never see or smell them, but we can make life hellish for his mailroom employees, not to mention the custodial staff. That will teach them to work for a polluter!

If "Anonymous in San Francisco" has pretensions to replacing Abbie Hoffman, he has a lot of work ahead of him. Abbie would never propose anything that hurt primarily working people. He would have given out Rawl's home address.

Sharon Thomas
New York



Solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and long

PETER KARMAN'S PURPORTED REVIEW OF Goulden's *Fit to Print: A.M. Rosenthal and His Times* (*ITT*, April 26) offers Karman's opinions, but it gives negligible attention to the methods and quality of the book. Karman refers almost in passing to "annoying" features of the work, such as Goulden's "bald indulgence" of Reed Irvine. Readers of *In These Times* may be interested to know that there is more than "bald indulgence"—Goulden sets Irvine up as a hero and uses him as a counterpoint to a running attack on Raymond Bonner, Gloria Emerson, Harrison Salisbury and anybody else who has departed from a Reed Irvine-type standard of patriotic news. The book is nasty, brutish, unreliable and long.

Edward S. Herman
Philadelphia

Missing minorities

I ENJOYED YOUR COVERAGE AND COVER PHOTO (*ITT*, April 19) of the abortion rights march in Washington, D.C., on April 9. Being a part of that march was an exhilarating experience I shall long remember. However, I wanted you to know, as surely the organizers of the march knew, that the reason that many minority women weren't at the march was that they were at the Women Against Racism conference that was held the same weekend in Iowa City.

The conference grew from a group of women who began to meet several years

ago at the University of Iowa. Racism, although not as overt as 20 years ago, is still alive and well and these women felt a need to try to do what they could to combat it. After several years of local conferences they assisted a group in Peoria, Ill., to hold their own conference in 1988. This year was their first national conference.

Many of us were torn between where to be that weekend. About a thousand people attended the conference in Iowa. May the work done there continue to flourish and grow.

Marie Micheletti
Tremont, Ill.

Riddle

IN THESE TIMES' COVERAGE OF ISRAEL AND PALESTINE has been very good, especially Joe Lockard's piece (April 19).

But, pray tell, at the end of an article confined to the situation in the West Bank, Palestine, why do you describe Lockard as a correspondent in Israel?

A.F. Saidy
Los Angeles

Editor's note: Because Lockard is based in Israel.

Kavetch, kavetch, kavetch

JOHN JUDIS (*ITT*, APRIL 26) WRITES: "COMMON Cause regularly calls for investigations of somebody or something."

Do I detect a slight quiver of envy on Judis' part? Is it because Common Cause constantly is complaining about dishonest

officials, misconduct in office—Republican or Democrat—and occasionally getting some results, committee hearings and attention that many other well-meaning groups do not get?

Or maybe I haven't been reading *In These Times* carefully. Somehow I had the dim perception that there were some things about our politicians and some of their financial supporters that you were not completely enamored of. Evidently only Common Cause constantly complains, whereas Judis basically approves of the contemporary "American" way. Maybe he has missed the slow but persistent growth in the public's concern for open and more accountable government, even expecting some honesty as a startling surprise, from its elected servants and their appointed bureaucrats.

Anyhow, I am relieved to know that what I read in your paper is not to be construed as "complaining." Thank goodness!

Or am I missing something?

Stuart Van Orden
Perkins, Okla.

Inquiry

I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD PRINT THE following:

For use in a book on organizations of the unemployed in the Great Depression, I seek photos, diaries, letters, leaflets, minutes of meetings, publications, scrapbooks—anything that throws light on the activities and demands of organizations such as the Unemployed Councils, Workers Alliance and Unemployed Leagues, and the results they achieved.

I will pay for photocopies of original materials if persons who have such materials do not wish to part with them. I will return all original materials I receive and give credit for any material I use.

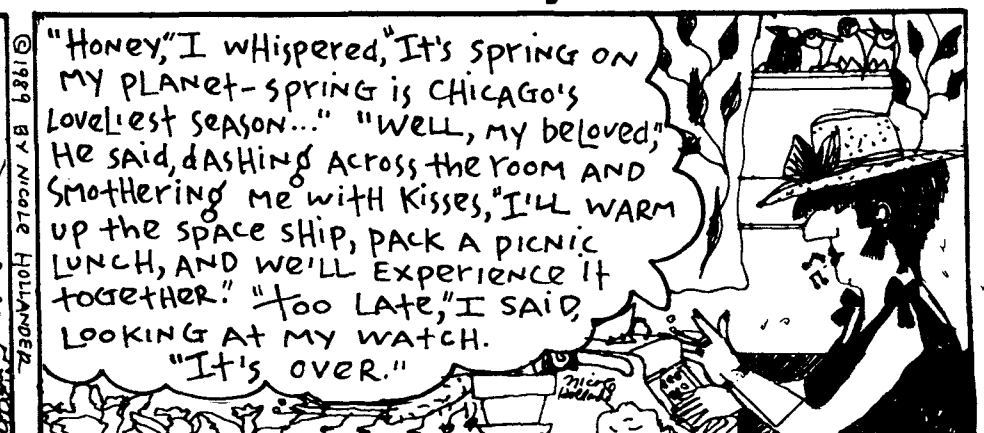
Franklin Folsom
Boulder, Colo.

Corrections

Dropped words altered the meaning of a sentence in a May 3 "Viewpoint" by J. Quam-Wickham and N. Quam-Wickham. The sentence should have read: "For starters, good union representation would have permitted a junior officer to refuse to steer for a captain who was apparently drunk."

In that same article, N. Quam-Wickham was identified as a teacher at the University of California, Berkeley. She is in fact a graduate student who sometimes teaches at the school.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

By Joe Lockard

IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST, DIVINE myth was both a form of reasoning and of daily life. In the modern Mideast, human myths rely on spurious causalities and short memories. These myths trap mainstream and left thinking alike and need examination.

The first myth of Mideast politics is that Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the U.S. are a magic negotiating triangle. If Uncle Sam can conjure a deal, the myth goes, the conflict of Jewish and Palestinian Arab nationalisms might be resolved. This belief is a mistake that comes from American innocence.

Each of the three parties functions within a radically conflicting set of internal political goals. The U.S. wants an indeterminate peace process, private-party, if it can be arranged. The PLO wants a specific, internationalized nation-building process, which doesn't interest the new administration and is anathema to Israel. Israel wants a quieter, riot-free version of the status quo.

The Bush administration views itself as an honest broker. It believes it can jumpstart the peace process, open channels of Israeli-Palestinian communication and "improve quality of life" in the Occupied Territories.

But the new U.S. administration can never function as a neutral diplomatic agent. In Palestinian eyes, the U.S. created the conditions that have enabled Israel occupation of the West Bank and Gaza to continue unhindered for more than 20 years. U.S.-supplied warplanes bombed thousands of Palestinians into their graves in Lebanese refugee camps; U.S.-supplied M-16s are used daily to suppress the *intifada*.

The U.S. has been aggressive and culpable, not neutral. This is the first limitation it faces.

America's proxy: The second myth is that the U.S. possesses the capacity to "encourage" Israel toward a peace settlement.

In Israel, true, friendly U.S. ties and policy coordination have become fundamentals of the political universe, a far cry from the mutual suspicions of the '50s. Only a small, powerless group of leftist Knesset members advocate returning to a more neutralist diplomatic position, relying on improved East European and Soviet relations.

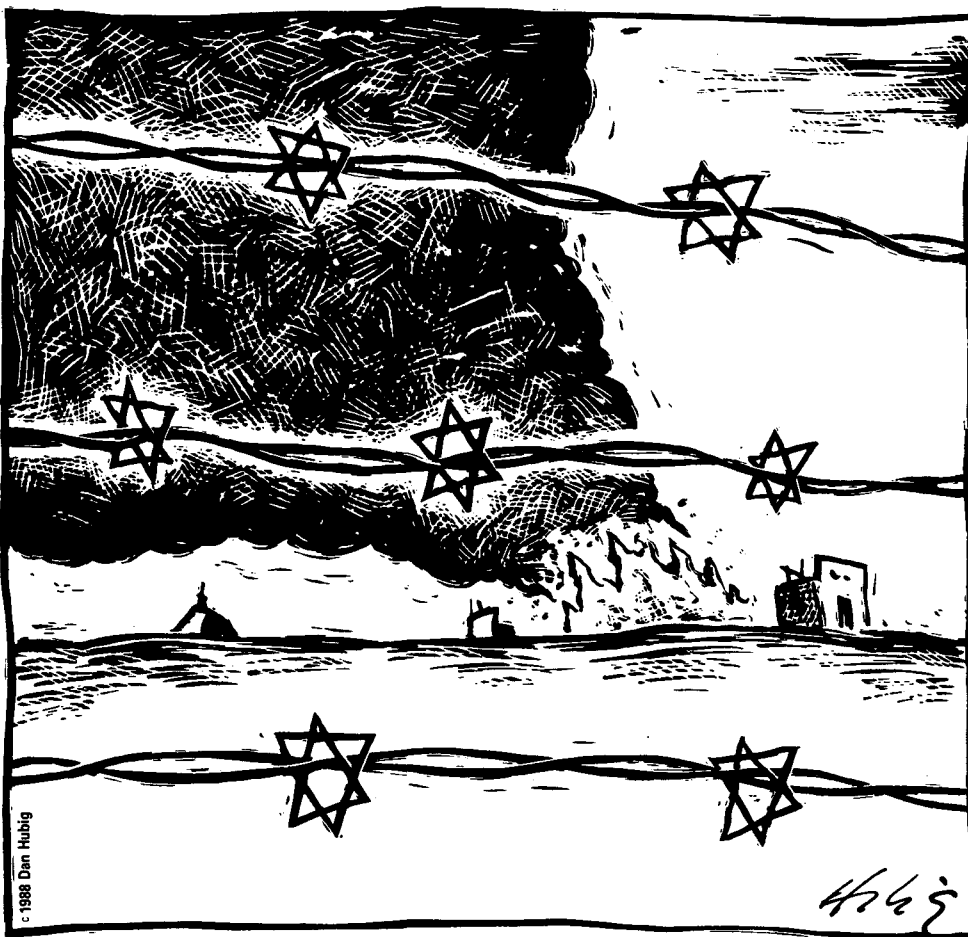
Israel's military planning has been Americanized, and Pentagon strategy has gradually been Israelized. The U.S. has seized the opportunity to gain an "onshore aircraft carrier" at the eastern end of the Mediterranean and to launch a multitude of joint military programs. The Israeli defense establishment has also made clear its eagerness to serve as a covert proxy for U.S. foreign policy. If Israel didn't exist, the Pentagon and CIA would have to invent the country.

But the public credibility of U.S. foreign policy depends on the overt realm, and State Department officials have politely protested new West Bank and Gaza settlements since they were first built. While the U.S. government cautiously distanced itself from Israel's increasingly tenacious occupation, it simultaneously acted to profit from a "special relationship."

Thus, the U.S. government has fed and ridden the tiger of Israeli territorial maximalism to its own substantial advantage.

There is, however, an increasing ten-

Mideast: dangerous myths and realistic paths to peace



dency among Washington pragmatists to link Israel's strategic situation to progress toward a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. But direct U.S. leverage on Israel's domestic policies is limited by Israel's usefulness in U.S. geostrategic planning. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir knows this and counts on it to resist pressure to talk to the Palestinians he's spent a lifetime rejecting. Shamir is a past master of the sitzkrieg and long ago learned to talk without giving.

Proprietary relations: This leaves us at the doorstep of the third, most dangerous, myth. The U.S.-Israeli relationship is apprehended as a proprietary one: American

Advocacy of a U.S. foreign policy that emphasizes Israeli-Palestinian co-existence is part of a positive agenda for the American left. But this must be combined with Mideast arms reduction negotiations, as part of a general reduction of U.S. and Soviet arms.

diplomatic discourse with Israel has tended to assume the manner of a bank manager addressing a valued but heavily indebted creditor.

But in fact the U.S.-Israel dynamic is governed by the same domestic oppositionism found in the International Monetary Fund-developing countries relationship. The

basic source of political authority is local—and foreign "recommendations" risk xenophobic backlash.

On the American left, this same proprietary perception has worked itself into an equally false countermyth that America can control Israeli policy.

With the onset of the *intifada* and its attendant human rights abuses, many on the left are proposing to suspend, withhold, cut or eliminate aid to Israel.

But these proposals are dangerously simplistic. They rely on a deliberate tipping of the Mideast balance of forces—reducing Israel's ability to survive—as a form of political punishment. Since the U.S. is one of two culpable superpowers in the Mideast arms buildup, walking away from a situation it helped create is irresponsible.

Nuclear consequences? Israeli military cutbacks resulting from a major U.S. aid slash would be dramatic—and dangerous. They could, in fact, be the best formula yet devised for the nuclearization of the Arab-Israeli conflict—and a shortcut to World War III.

On Israel's eastern front, Syria deploys 30 standing divisions of ground forces, or the same number as NATO does in its European theater. Iraq's supermilitarized economy supports another 35 divisions. If a U.S. reduction in aid endangered Israel's front-line military posture, the only Israeli alternative in the face of such overwhelming quantitative superiority would be deployment of nuclear weapons.

Current Israeli policy is to deny possessing warheads and to state that Israel will not be the first to introduce such weapons into the Mideast conflict. But recent policy debates in Israel have examined the deterrent alternative of openly declaring that the Jewish state possesses nuclear warheads.

Punitive aid cuts to Israel are counter-

productive. But how, then, can Washington best spend the taxpayer's dollar to support Palestinian human and national rights?

Remedies: In 1988-89, \$7.1 million in U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) funds was directed to the West Bank and Gaza. The proposed 1989-90 appropriation is \$15 million.

Most of these monies are funneled through private voluntary organizations to support health and education projects. Minor sums are directed toward agricultural cooperatives and economic development.

To compare, 1.5 million Palestinian received about \$4.70 per capita, while 4 million Israelis each received \$720.

Newly emerging Palestine should be drawn onto the U.S. foreign aid map. An *intifada*-generated appropriations initiative on Capitol Hill might take three directions:

- Self-determination is meaningless without the means for economic independence. Israeli policy has frozen Palestinian development and encouraged a commuter labor force to fuel its industry and services with low-paid workers. Shifting U.S. foreign aid monies toward support for stagnant Palestinian economic organizations and cooperatives would support the emerging economic self-reliance that has been a centerpiece of the *intifada*.

- The European Community last year endorsed a trade agreement with Gaza and the West Bank. It provides for direct export arrangements, free of Israeli control, and is a concrete expression of European support. It's time for the U.S. to follow Europe's lead and begin negotiations toward an appropriate trade agreement to complement the free-trade agreement it already maintains with Israel.

- Human services in West Bank and Gaza are in disastrous condition. Improved U.S. aid support would help remedy some of the human damage created by U.S.-supplied weapons.

To implement an effective Palestinian aid policy would also require an end to the supine U.S. agreement that now allows the Israeli army to review and reject AID projects on "security grounds." This frequently means eliminating economic infrastructure funds or projects backed by Palestinian nationalists. Without this step, AID will continue to fail the test of credibility in Palestinian eyes.

Mideast START talks: Advocacy of a U.S. foreign policy that emphasizes Israeli-Palestinian co-existence represents a strong and positive agenda for the American left. To be effective, however, this must be combined with overall Mideast arms reduction negotiations. At the same time as the U.S., Western Europe and the Soviet bloc have entered into strategic arms reduction talks, all are pouring armaments into the Mideast nearly as fast as production lines allow. The Mideast must be included on the international disarmament agenda, prior or parallel to an Arab-Israeli political settlement.

There is one final myth to confront: the myth that leadership takes time to emerge, that governments move slowly, that peace-making demands laborious patience. There is no time. The Mideast is living on borrowed hours.

Joe Lockard writes regularly for *In These Times* from Israel.

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By Lois Weiner

WHEN ED FISKE, *NEW YORK TIMES* education writer, called the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards an educational "time bomb" on April 5, he was correct in one sense: the board will help to destroy democratic control of schools.

The national system for teacher certification being developed with \$50 million of federal, corporate and foundation funding is being modeled on the professional specialty boards like those in medicine. A panel formed by the Carnegie Corporation will certify teachers who pay a licensing fee and pass examinations now being developed at Stanford University. Board certification is the linchpin of the Carnegie Corporation's drive to professionalize teaching—and to insulate schools from popular control.

Teachers for the 21st Century, the Carnegie Corporation's program for school reform, spells out how those teachers who are certified professionals will run the schools. In the Carnegie scenario, teachers not on the top of the career ladder, parents and citizens will have no institutional authority. Parents are clients with no responsibility or authority to influence school policy, and citizens are denied even the minimal access parents have. Popular "interference" is thwarted by reducing state government to the rubber stamp status it has in licensing other professions.

The *Boston Globe's* report (September 4, 1988) on Sens. Claiborne Pell and Christopher Dodd's legislation to fund the program noted that all those involved with the board presume teachers scoring well on the exam should win higher salaries and new job responsibilities. But there was no mention of teachers who are not board certified. Like parents and citizens, they will not share power in restructured schools.

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, has become the most prominent salesman for the Carnegie plan. Now retired as president of the union's largest local, its New York City affiliate, Shanker faces only the most attenuated checks on his actions and has used the opportunity to sell the elixir of professionalization to teachers and a public hungry for a cure for education's ills. On the other hand, National Education Association (NEA) President Mary Futrell has been reluctant to endorse the Carnegie plan for national certification. But the NEA has no alternative vision for reform, so as the Carnegie Corporation and its eager agent Shanker promote the plan, the NEA says less and less about its limitations.

The Carnegie proposal has tapped teachers' frustration at being denied the opportunity to apply their skills, education and ideals. Schools structured like factories within bureaucratic school systems suffocate teachers' creativity, autonomy and thoughtfulness. Many of the most active teachers see the drive for professionalization as a call to empower teachers and wrest authority from both school bureaucracies and local political machines concerned mainly with perpetuating their own political power rather than improving life in schools for students and teachers. They are seduced by the desire for greater control over their work and either do not detect the underlying social and political design or accept it because they fear parent and

Proposed school reforms crib on democratic control

community involvement.

Certification is bad: But teachers, parents and citizens who care about education's democratic purposes should oppose the Carnegie plan for certification and its broader agenda of professionalization and demand that the federal government end its funding of the project. An effort to create national certification for teachers is wrong-headed on at least these five counts:

- It reduces social ownership of education by cutting a professional board loose from democratic control and giving it total responsibility for deciding what skills and attitudes teachers must have. Although certification will be voluntary at the start, proponents of the plan have predicted that school systems will be pressured to hire "board certified" whenever possible.

- The boards used as models for professionalizing teaching are themselves seriously flawed and under attack for failing to protect the public interest. Take, for example, an Ohio doctor, James Burt, who was accused of botching surgery on hundreds of women, performing crude experiments without their knowledge or consent. Burt, board certified, was not even charged by the state medical board until the governor intervened. His case is an extreme example of the systemic inability of state medical boards to place the interests of medical

consumers above those of practitioners. The flaw is in having a private organization control a social service. It is a flaw exacerbated in the plan for certifying teachers.

- Tiers of teachers, with board certified teachers receiving higher salaries, as is the plan, will stratify schools even more than they are now. Another hierarchical layer is the last "improvement" schools need.

- Within the schools, who will determine which students are taught by presumably superior board certified teachers? Is there any doubt that children from the most advantaged groups will have the greatest proportion of board certified teachers and disadvantaged children the smallest? Without acknowledging the anti-democratic implications, Fiske noted that soon "real estate agents in tony suburbs will boast to potential buyers" about the high percentage of board certified teachers in local schools. Schools without the money to lure board certified teachers will be certified inferior.

- The task the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has set for it-

self—determining precisely what teachers must know and do to be effective—has been criticized by some educators as being inimical to building an understanding of how people teach and learn. William Ayers, writing in the September issue of the *Journal of Teacher Education*, argues that trying to establish teaching's "knowledge base," as the board has promised, actually obscures how complex a task teaching is, how specific it is to each person and situation.

The schools clearly need fixing, but the plan to professionalize teaching is just what education and teachers don't need. The quality of teaching, like the quality of the schools themselves, needs to be on the agenda of a movement demanding democratic control of the schools. To state the need for a movement of community activists, parents, teachers and students is not to detract from the obstacles that impede its formation. But failure to reclaim the schools as democratic institutions will have consequences far more daunting than the stumbling blocks to assembling a coalition to fight for popular control of schools. ■

Lois Weiner is a doctoral student at Harvard Graduate School of Education, on leave from teaching at the High School for the Humanities in New York.

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Washington, D.C.

JUNE 16-17, 1989



Join us to commemorate the June 16, 1976 massacre of children in the township of Soweto.

AGENDA OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

- 10 a.m.** **BRIEFING SESSION** at the Capitol to inform visitors about the sanctions bill.
Noon **STAND IN SOLIDARITY** on the Capitol steps, including prayers and songs.
1-4 p.m. **MEET YOUR SENATOR** to urge support for sanctions legislation.
7 p.m. **"SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE"** with Allan Boesak, including nonviolence training at Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, D.C.
9 p.m. **BEGIN ALL-NIGHT CANDLELIGHT VIGIL** at the White House. Prayers of solidarity and songs of truth will lead us through the night.

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

- 11 a.m.** **"SPEAK FOR THE CHILDREN"** Rally/Service at the Sylvan Theatre, featuring Allan Boesak and key religious and labor leaders speaking out to end apartheid's terror. Entertainers against apartheid will provide music.
1 p.m. **"MARCH FOR THE CHILDREN"** to the White House to call out the names of apartheid's victims, to demand a change in U.S. policy toward apartheid, and to stand in solidarity with the South Africa freedom movement. The event will be followed by the option for nonviolent civil disobedience.

The march is part of **FROM PENTECOST TO SOWETO**, the first ecumenical campaign sponsored by the South Africa Crisis Coordinating Committee (Partial list includes representatives of the following): African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, American Baptist Churches, American Committee on Africa, American Federation of Government Employees, Bread for the World, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Church Women United, Clergy and Laity Concerned, Episcopal Church, Evangelicals for Social Action, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Interfaith Centre for Corporate Responsibility, Jesuit Social Ministries, National Office, National Baptist Convention (USA), National Baptist Convention of America, National Council of Churches, National House of the Lord Church, Pax Christi, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Presbyterian Church USA, SANE/FREEZE, Sojourners, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Washington Office on Africa, World Council of Churches, U.S. Office

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To boldly go where no ad has before

By Tom Engelhardt

AS "CHANNEL ONE," WHITTLE Communications' attempt to beam ads into schools daily via a prime-time-style news show, ends its test run, so too has the expectable storm of public protest and debate exhausted itself—at least temporarily. But as Whittle management evaluates whether to expand from six to 10,000 schools by 1990, delivering to advertisers what the *New York Times* calls "one of the largest captive audiences of teen-agers ever assembled," an unexpected critique of Channel One is developing in the ad community.

For advertising professionals, Channel One's use of video and satellite technology to penetrate that rarest of entities—an ad-free environment—gave the Whittle scheme a patina of innovative modernity. Nonetheless, there is a growing awareness that a "captive" audience, policed by teachers bent on testing students on material seen, may not be an appropriate way to ensure early brand loyalty. Ad managers and agency executives are quietly considering the problems involved in having their products associated not with excitement, sensuality and fun, but with homework and old Mrs. Grunby, the social studies teacher.

Many cite the recently released *21st Century Report* from the Institute of Life Styles and Life Studies in Cambridge, Mass., that shows school to be the least popular American environment for 14-18 year-olds with \$25 or more in weekly pocket money.

In an increasingly narrowcast world in which "environment" is crucial to the process of "product bonding," more and more ad professionals are privately questioning the

FANTASY

Whittle approach in a critique that goes something like this:

Your message here: Teenagers, who control an estimated \$60 billion a year of family income, are still remarkably shielded by school from the ad/consumer universe. An environment in which the Walkman is banned, personal decoration frowned upon and all but cafeteria food discouraged has to be considered a relatively consumption-free zone. And if one adds in the consumption-free space created by homework, untold prime hours of ad influence are lost every week.

Ad professionals feel this cripples American society both in terms of its potential buying power and of its democratic spirit. They point, for instance, to the *21st Century Report's*

figures showing that 83 percent of all girls aged 14 to 18 years would rather be in the most dilapidated hypermall than in the best science class imaginable (the figures for English, social studies and math are 85 percent, 88 percent and 94 percent respectively).

These ad pros conclude, however, that if you wanted to reach a population of prisoners, you would hardly choose to put yourself in jail. By analogy, they feel that Whittle-like efforts to break the ad into the school environment are misplaced. The only profitable approach to concentrate on, they suggest, is breaking teenagers out.

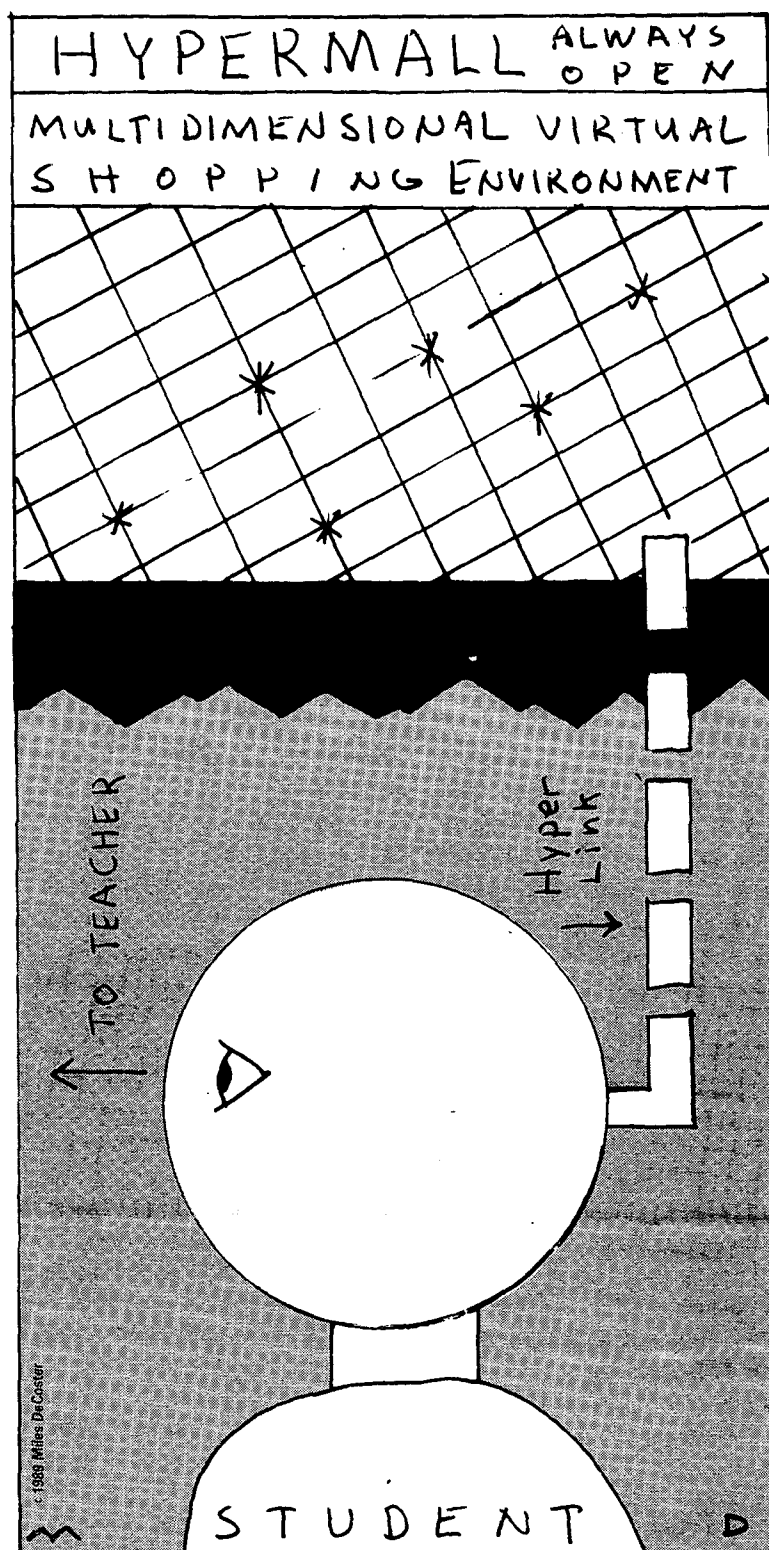
Fortunately, given trends in corporate conglomeration, some multinational R&D budgets now equal the GNPs of small Third World countries. As a result, ad professionals find themselves poised to fund and exploit a series of scientific breakthroughs that, by the next century, may reverse the whole concept of ad outreach. In fact, a privately funded study by London's Saatchi Center for Wellbeing and Human Development reports that two unnamed agency giants have already seeded R&D subdepartments to study "virtual and hyperspatial modes of transport for bringing the potential consumer directly to the ad."

Beam me up, Saatchi: The Saatchi Center's study highlights two counter-Whittlesque "scenarios." The first involves the use of Virtual Environments, or VEs. VEs are computer-generated three-dimensional worlds which suitably equipped humans can "enter" and with which they can interact.

The relatively crude VEs of the present moment, which already have widespread NASA and military applications, are expected to give way within a decade to visually sophisticated and "inhabitable" worlds that would appeal to advertisers. Planning is already underway to "transport" students to a variety of computer-generated hypermall environments during school hours. There, without ever physically leaving the classroom, they could freely "wander," electronically purchasing products later to be shipped to their homes.

These computer-generated products could, in turn, meld with any sort of "entertainment environment" advertisers might care to computerize with three results: the elimination of television (Why watch a screen when you can be inside it, singing and buying with the Michael Jackson or Madonna of some future moment?); the freeing-up of the vast ad funding television absorbs; and, finally, the coming of the first totally ad-controlled selling environment in history, with previously unheard of "psychoprofits" from "cybermers" (cybernetic customers).

At the moment, even the most ad-



vanced, freestanding VEs in development involve the wearing of cumbersome helmets and encoded gloves, inconceivable in a hostile autocratic setting like school. VE designers believe, however, that miniaturization

Ad executives are considering the problems of having their products associated with homework and old Mrs. Grunby.

will someday allow VE components to be hidden in, say, a "pimple" on an acne-streaked face and an "eraser" on a pencil. Then a student, seemingly hard at work writing a theme, might actually be gliding via hand-and-cheek controls through an MTV-style "living catalogue."

The second, rather more futuristic, scenario Saatchi identifies as promising involves the work of MIT

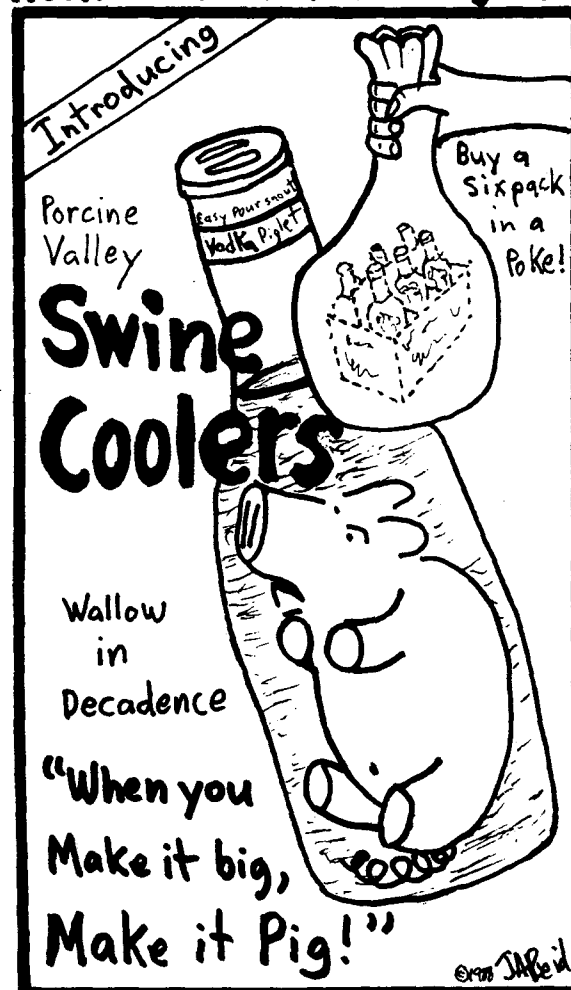
physicist Neils Konek in reconstituting human beings (he calls them "beamers") in all-ad environments, and a teleportation system being explored by Professor Issue Kiyamoto of Tokyo University. Konek and Kiyamoto hope by the year 2125 that state-of-the-art black-hole technology will create out-of-body "contexts" in which students could actually be transported into an as-yet-undeveloped "Ad World," while their material bodies remained in the classroom and, to the eyes of their teachers, fully attentive. "In our research," Konek says, "we've discovered that leaving as little as .078 percent of an affluent teenager's brainpower in the classroom is enough to maintain a B minus average."

"I guarantee you," adds Professor Konek, "that when we look back from the 22nd century, Channel One's going to seem as much like an evolutionary dead-end for advertising as Neanderthals did from the point of view of Homo sapiens." ■

Tom Engelhardt is a senior editor at Pantheon Books.

Rough CUTS BY JAREid

Near Misses in Marketing #11



1989 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report

By U.S. Department of State
Bureau of International Narcotics
Matters
235 pp.

Kings of Cocaine: Inside the Medellín Cartel—An Astonishing True Story of Murder, Money and International Corruption

By Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leen
Simon & Schuster, 391 pp., \$19.95

The Killings in Colombia

By The Americas Watch
123 pp., \$10.00

Warlords of Crime: Chinese Secret Societies—The New Mafia

By Gerald Posner
McGraw Hill, 289 pp., \$18.95

By George Winslow

W E'VE TURNED THE CORNER on drug addiction in America," President Nixon confidently declared in 1973, only five years after he got into the White House by preaching a tough law-and-order creed.

Three conservative Republican administrations later, the only winner in the battle against drugs has been a new generation of law-and-order politicians who are using the crisis to lobby for the death penalty and mandatory drug testing. In 1989, as President Bush makes more speeches on how his administration will finally win the war on drug abuse, Americans will consume more than 164.8 million ounces of marijuana, 72.6 million grams of cocaine and 5.9 million grams of heroin.

U.S.-backed drug biz booms: Just who produced all these drugs can be found in the State Department's 1989 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR)*, a detailed study of drug production, arrests and crop destruction around the world. In 1961 and again in 1986, Congress passed laws forcing the State Department to issue an annual report on foreign drug production. In theory, every country receiving U.S. aid was to make progress against drug smuggling and narcotics production. No crackdown on drugs, no aid.

Most of the *INCSR*, which is released to Congress and the press but not to the general public, reads like a Wall Street investment report on a particularly promising growth industry. Opium production has doubled in the last three years, and 1988 saw a bountiful harvest of at least 173,000 metric tons of coca leaves, the raw material in manufacturing cocaine. That adds up to a \$300 billion worldwide drug industry, enough money to pay off the \$1.2 trillion Third World debt in about four years.

Many of these numbers should be taken with several metric tons of salt. But the real problem with this

report—and the policies that have shaped U.S. anti-drug campaigns for the past 20 years—is not statistical, but political and economic.

In the 1989 *INCSR* report, the Bush administration continued the Reagan administration policy of placing Cold War ideology over drug smuggling. The State Department recommends that Congress cut off aid to only six countries—Iran, Syria, Laos, Panama, Afghanistan and Burma. With the exceptions of Panama—which the State Department certified as being eligible for aid in March 1988 even though Col. Noriega was indicted for drug smuggling only one month before the 1988 report was issued—these radical Moslem or socialist governments wouldn't receive U.S. aid even if they executed every drug dealer in their nations.

Rebel sell: Afghanistan, the world's second-largest opium producer, offers a particularly galling example of how land-and-order conservatives in the Reagan and Bush administrations have been willing to tolerate

NARCOTICS

addiction and drug murders at home because of their obsession with fighting communism abroad. The *INCSR* accuses the Soviet-backed government of sponsoring opium production, ignoring the fact that 87 percent of the country's opium is produced in regions controlled by U.S.-financed rebels.

"We must grow and sell opium to fight our holy war against the Russian non-believers," the brother of a leading rebel commander and a major landowner of opium fields told the *New York Times* in 1986. Thanks to tens of millions of dollars in covert CIA aid during the Reagan administration, Afghanistan now produces between 700 and 800 metric tons of opium each year, up from only 225 tons in 1981.

But Afghanistan isn't the only part of the world where politics have wreaked havoc on avowed U.S. drug policies. Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leen's 1989 book *Kings of Cocaine* provides an entertaining, anecdotal account of the new cocaine capitalists, the Colombia-based Medellín cartel that grew from a group of small-time local crooks to a multinational crime cartel in less than 10 years. Unfortunately, *Kings of Cocaine* also offers a fine example of how the mainstream media has uncritically accepted many of the policies that have crippled America's war on drugs.

This anecdotal account of violence and mayhem virtually ignores some key elements of the drug economy, such as the Third World debt crisis that spurred increased production of opium and cocaine in the late '70s and offshore banking havens that launder billions of dollars in drug money annually. A crackdown on these offshore banking havens

Credibility a casualty in the war on drugs

would quickly cripple the drug trade by preventing the international cartels from enjoying their ill-gotten gains, but pressure from Wall Street and the financial community has kept the Reagan and Bush administrations from taking any meaningful action against the banking industry. The financial community has also opposed serious proposals to help solve the Third World debt crisis, making it unlikely that Third World countries will give up a \$300 billion industry at a time when they are staggering under huge foreign debts.

Narco-terrorism ruse: Award-winning investigative journalists Leen and Gugliotta make no mention of how cocaine imports doubled after President Reagan put George Bush in charge of the war on drugs, and they ignore evidence that U.S.-backed contra guerrillas helped make Honduras and Costa Rica major transshipment points for cocaine. Even a watered-down report by the Senate subcommittee on terrorism, narcotics and international communications that was released this April concluded that "U.S. officials involved in Central America failed to address the drug issue for fear of jeopardizing the war effort against Nicaragua."

An excellent and thoroughly documented case study of how politics has sabotaged U.S. policy can, however, be found in an April 1989 Americas Watch report on death squads in Colombia. In 1984 U.S. Ambassador Lewis Tambs claimed to have uncovered in Colombia a jungle cocaine laboratory operated by FARC guerrillas and the Medellín cartel. Over the next few years the Reagan administration used this case to make left-wing narco-terrorism the focus of its anti-drug campaign.

Many U.S. press reports and books like *Kings of Cocaine* repeat the narco-terrorism line, even though

Colombian officials now admit that there was no evidence to support Tambs' original charge.

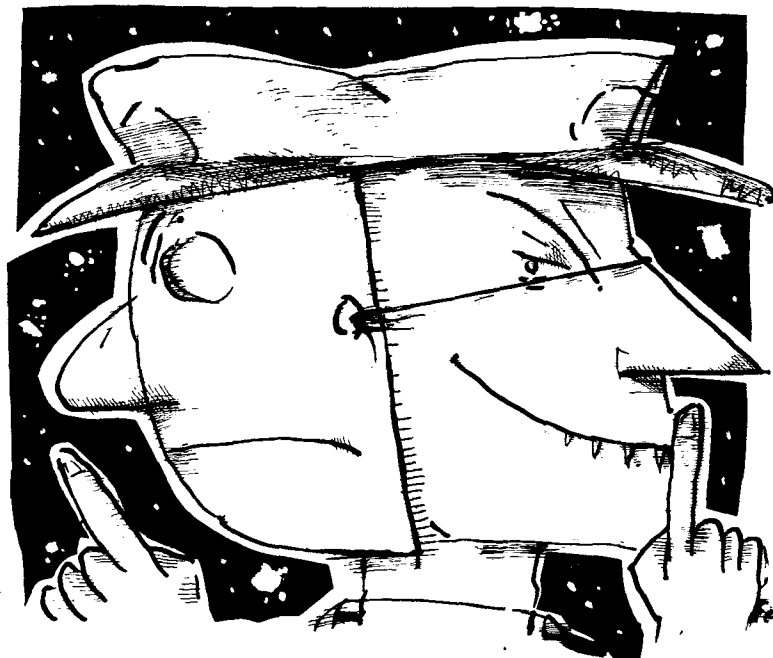
After an in-depth investigation of political violence in Colombia, which claimed 4,000 lives in 1988, the Americas Watch report notes that the guerrillas do benefit from the trade in that they impose a 10 percent tax on all business that is conducted in regions they control. But the report stresses that "confrontations between the drug cartels and the guerrillas are much more important and far-reaching than instances of cooperation."

The Killings in Colombia documents dozens of cases where the cocaine cartels have formed extensive alliances with death squads, major landlords, regional police and military officials to attack and assassinate members of left-wing unions, political parties and peasant groups.

By emphasizing the narco-terrorism theory, the report concludes that U.S. officials ignored "cooperation between the security forces and the drug cartels," who have "become principal actors" in the country's political violence.

On a Chinese rock: In *Warlords of Crime: Chinese Secret Societies—The New Mafia*, Gerald Posner has produced one of the few books on organized crime that adequately cover the political economy of the drug trade. Posner tells the story of Chinese organized crime groups who control much of the world's heroin trade by tracing their operations around the world, from the poor

Afghanistan's opium production tripled under Reagan's influence.



© 1989 Peter Hannan

peasants in the Golden Triangle to the wealthy money laundering centers in Hong Kong and the ghettos of New York City.

Some of the best chapters of Posner's book are devoted to history. In one section he traces the rise of opium addiction in Asia as Western powers in Southeast Asia used opium dens to finance colonial rule. In another he describes how American officials used the opium trade and recruited Chinese organized crime groups to fight communism in Asia.

Ironically, Posner points out, the Western policy of promoting opium to bolster colonialism—and later the Cold War—soon came back to haunt Europe and America. Following World War II, U.S. officials helped Nationalist Chinese generals set up smuggling operations in the Golden Triangle as a way of fighting Mao's Red Army—one of these generals remains among the world's largest heroin dealers. But as corrupt U.S.-backed elites in Vietnam, Taiwan and Laos began selling drugs to American soldiers in Vietnam, heroin addiction produced a crime wave at home.

Unfortunately, that crime wave proved to be a godsend for law-and-order politicians like Richard Nixon. Early in his career Nixon was heavily backed by the so-called China Lobby, a network of powerful American conservatives and corrupt Chinese leaders who were tied to Chinese organized crime and the opium trade.

Nixon's investigation into communist influence in the State Department helped bring on two decades of Cold War hysteria that muzzled the press and censored criticism of the Nationalist Chinese. Later, when these old allies helped loose a drug plague on the country, Nixon revived his political career by promising a tough law-and-order crusade against drugs. The China Lobby pitched in by contributing a quarter of a million dollars to Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign.

Much the same dynamic is now being played out with George Bush. When he headed the CIA and President Reagan's fight against drugs, Bush refused to crack down on U.S. allies like Noriega and the contra rebels even though they were involved in the drug trade. Then, during the 1988 election, Bush deftly deflected criticism of those policies by backing the death penalty for drug dealers and attacking Gov. Michael Dukakis for being soft on crime. That, of course, means Washington will continue to fight a Cold War against drugs, even though this deadly and highly addictive mixture of hypocrisy and law-and-order rhetoric has produced the worst outbreak of lawlessness in 20th-century America.

George Winslow, a New York-based journalist, writes regularly on economics and politics.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 17-23, 1989 19



Richard Brooks and Nicolas Cascone in 84 *Charlie MoPic*: raw artifice in the jungle pressure cooker in "the Nam."

Fable maker *Charlie MoPic* on patrol

By Pat Aufderheide

WE'RE ALWAYS ASKING IF Vietnam movies are accurate, true to the experience. Well, it was a big, long war, with lots of experiences. It makes more sense

to ask what kind of story a Vietnam movie should tell us, and whose story it is. 84 *Charlie MoPic* and a traveling package of Vietnamese films give us a variety of perspectives.

Post-*Platoon* Vietnam films and TV programs have been marked by

their near-relentless focus on the "grunts" of the American war machine—both during and after their sojourn in the otherworldly territory of "the Nam." In these films, the enemy is often invisible, the villains are incompetent American authorities and the real battle is just to survive.

The film onslaught comes on the heels of a recovery of public affection for Vietnam veterans, marked by the 1985 New York welcome-home march for vets. Celebrated are the men (and, in *China Beach*, the women) who did their job in spite of the meaninglessness, corruption and brutality around them.

First-person war: 84 *Charlie MoPic* extends the trend in a subjective mode. It claims the first-person voice as aggressively as the first Vietnam books did. Dedicated by filmmaker and Vietnam vet Patrick Duncan to the men of various companies, "wherever you may be," it's an anti-romantic grunt movie.

This is also the first film to portray the "living room war" as a movie. The title refers to the film's protagonist and storyteller, the cameraman (Byron Thomas: "Mo-Pic" stands for "motion picture") who, with a green lieutenant (Jonathan Emerson), accompanies a patrol to document successful fighting techniques.

The film pretends we are watching raw footage, from the opening scene as the company members introduce themselves and clown for the camera. We hear the clunk-clunk of the cameraman lurching behind the company as it snakes through the brush, and our angle of vision lurches as he inexpertly moves the camera from one subject to another.

The rawness is, of course, an artifice. Synch sound magically occurs, and the cameraman often films far past the limits of his equipment. There are no outtakes in this

clean dramatic narrative of a patrol that goes awry.

It's an artifice that works. The film has a roughhewn look (it was made on a low budget with the help of the Sundance Institute, and is a rare Sundance effort to have an angry breath of life). Its stripped-down soundtrack features the sounds of the bush and the silence of dread; the only '60s music comes wafting in faintly on a radio, shut down mid-song for security reasons. Hammed-up acting takes the gloss off what are supposed to be non-actors. The movie's style virtually promises it's telling the uncut truth.

Truth and consequences: What kinds of truths does it tell? First, a truth of specificity. These characters are not *Platoon*ish archetypes, nor *Hamburger Hill* generic soldiers. Each character is fiercely individualistic, and their identifying tics are plausible—not mere devices.

Patrick Duncan's 84 *Charlie MoPic* is an anti-romantic "grunt" movie.

Duncan also uses the little living room of the campsites and resting places as a platform to deliver messages, woven into the plot as the company tries to educate the naive lieutenant and his sidekick. For instance, when the cracker (Glenn Morshower) angrily responds to the cameraman's question about racism in regard to his black sergeant (Richard Brooks, in a forbiddingly impressive characterization), we learn that racism didn't die on the field of combat, but it was put on hold.

We also learn that fear is ever-present and lifesavingly appropriate. Survival depends on adopting "Charlie's" tactics, which the American soldiers admire. The war is

being sabotaged from above, from career officers like the lieutenant, who sees combat as a cagey career move. When the sergeant forces the lieutenant to kill a Vietnamese soldier with a knife, we learn that war means killing other people who have names and families; and as the patrol suffers casualties we learn what a euphemism the word "casualty" is.

84 *Charlie MoPic* makes by far the greatest claim to authenticity of recent Vietnam films. It's a grunt-level, smell-the-stench authenticity. This collection of unsung heroes is made larger by their life-and-death experiences. You gain respect for men who undertook their mission with military professionalism, whether American or Vietnamese.

The American war: Thanks to the Vietnam Film Project, we're finally getting to see how the Vietnamese present "the American war" to themselves (or at least, how a state-run cinema presents it to them—see accompanying story). The project, co-sponsored by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Film and Television Archives, the Asia Society and the East-West Center in Honolulu, results from a trip to Vietnam by UCLA's Geoffrey Gilmore, who surveyed recent Vietnamese cinema there. The package of seven films, most about the war, tours major cities in the U.S. during the next two years after its debut at the Hawaii International Film Festival.

Seeing the war through Vietnamese lenses also means filtering it through cinematic conventions that look quaintly dated in the West. The films take you not only to the other end of the world, but back in time, to the storytelling and production techniques of classic Hollywood studio sound stage cinema (at the low-budget end of the scale).

Some films in the series deal directly with the war, including the 1964 documentary *Victory at Dien Bien Phu* and the recent *The Abandoned Field—Free Fire Zone*, about a young couple serving as Viet Cong liaisons in the Mekong Delta. But the majority feature civilian society and the war's aftermath. Americans, if present at all, are as much a backdrop to the drama as Vietnamese are in our war films.

Coming home: In the year of *Dis- tant Thunder* and *Jackknife*, both about the painful adjustment of Vietnam vets to a world that changed irrevocably while they were in "the Nam," it's fascinating to watch *Brothers and Relations*. In this film directed by Tran Vu and Nguyen Hu Luyen, a vet returns to Hanoi just when everyone has given him up for dead. In fact, after his father's death his brother has rented out his room to a charming co-ed and her disabled father.

But he's not just displaced in a physical sense. The vet's family

Vietnamese films in the postwar period

If you went by the films shown in the Vietnam Film Project, you might think the Vietnamese film industry was devoted solely to films about "the American war."

Not so, says Nguyen Thu, head of Vietnam's five film studios, interviewed during the Washington, D.C., Filmfest with two of Vietnam's leading directors, Hai Ninh and Hong Sen. But the 20 to 25 annually produced feature films, he explained, are made with a firm focus on social issues.

"Film in Vietnam today has as its purpose to take part in the construction of a new society," he said. Artists have to consider the government—since Vietnamese film, whose export market is still embryonic, is fully funded by the state—and also the audience, whose box office support is critical. (In a population of 60 million, 340 million tickets are sold each year.) Along with social dramas, Vietnamese directors make comedies—but no musicals, although some documentaries on music are produced.

Still, in the reconstruction of Vietnam, and in the construction of the socialist "New Man," the war and its legacy looms large—as in the box office success of *When the Tenth Month Came*.

"People would leave the theaters with tears in their eyes," said Thu. He thinks the film was especially popular because it deals with the silent suffering of women, an invisible but pervasive cost of the war.

As for American films on the war, Thu has no patience with a *Rambo* or *The Deer Hunter* ("I assume the American characters were well done, but the Vietnamese aspect was simply not truthful"). But he likes films ranging from *Coming Home* to *Platoon*. "*Platoon* showed that the Americans lost the war because the goal was not clear," he said. "Individuals lose their sense of direction when they don't know why they're fighting."

Vietnamese films are popular at home, Thu said. But so, added director Ninh, are Hong Kong spectacles and action dramas from around the world—"especially among the young people." The films that these directors admire, by contrast, are the classics of international cinema: those by Griffith, Eisenstein, Kurosawa, De Sica, Godard and, of course, Chaplin. "Everywhere we go, they ask for Chaplin posters," said translator Do Linh Khai. —P.A.

problems are a microcosm of what the film portrays as a moral crisis in Vietnam today. The civilian brother is now a professional, angling for a business trip to Singapore that's really going to be a shopping trip for black-marketable consumer goods. His wife has a thriving business as a black marketer. The co-ed's example doesn't inspire the shell-shocked vet to study, and he can't get a job that's better than security guard without job training.

The tale comes to crisis when the wife's mother begs her children to recover her son's bones, buried in a military cemetery in Saigon. No one has a minute to spare from his or her entrepreneurial life, so the vet gets the detail. What happens to him on that voyage and on his return slam the director's point home.

Brothers and Relations, like most of the films in the series, is textbook storytelling cinema—briskly told, easy to follow and psychologically plausible. The non-histrionic ensemble acting style matches the tone of the production. Each of the characters is more exemplary than individualistic. None of the supremely good-looking (and well-groomed) actresses is given room to step out of stereotype. The film's soundtrack showcases one of the many mournful legacies of colonialism, derivative French-style pop music.

Silent suffering: Other films in the series hark back to wartime conditions, but again, far from the front. They demonstrate an emphasis on what the head of the Vietnamese film industry (see accompanying story) calls the "silent suffering" of women

in the war. They also demonstrate how much easier it is to tell this story when the war in question is not controversial among civilians.

When the Tenth Month Comes, directed by Dang Nhat Mihn, is a melodrama that Douglas Sirk could have been proud of. A soldier's wife returns to a village, concealing from her son and father-in-law the secret that her husband has been killed. To bolster the deceit, she convinces an earnest young schoolmaster to forge letters from the front. But her ruse is discovered by the ever-zealous citizens' committee (portrayed as a gossip-happy cabal) and misinterpreted as a love affair. The film's plot is spiced with a traditional play and magical visits to a local god; the film thus incorporates ancient traditions into a timely (and timeless) story of

wartime loss and women's endurance.

Fairytale for 17-Year-Olds, directed by Nguyen Zuan Son, also takes place during the war, but is seen from the vantage point of a high school in Hanoi and is marked by gently meditative expression. Strikingly undidactic and wistful (the script was written by a woman), the plot also concerns women's and civilians' roles in the war. It's less about heroic suffering than teen dreams of romantic love shattered by war. A high school girl strikes up a pen-pal correspondence with a soldier and falls in love with her image of him. Her fantasies draw her away from the attentions of a local boy, who soon heads out for the war with his high school buddies. *Fairytales* not only charms for its vision of teen

dreaminess, but also for its evocative cinematography, visual symbols and its references to a Buddhist legend of love and loss.

Vietnamese movies offer a rare perspective on the war, and on Vietnam today. It's fascinating just to be able to see Vietnamese living rooms on screen and to see how the Vietnamese are making sense, through movies, of the cost of the war.

The melodramatic clarity of these films also tells you about the difference between a war that must be fought and one that lacks a compelling rationale. In American movies about the war, including *84 Charlie MoPic*, we're seeing the construction of heroism on the ashes of public policy.

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The U.S. and the Philippines:

In Our Image

Written and narrated by Stanley Karnow
PBS

By John Stevenson

AN AFFECTING MONTAGE BEGINS each of the three hour-long segments of *In Our Image*. To the haunting strains of the song "Filipino" by Freddy Aguilar, images illustrating facets of U.S.-Philippine relations unfold in reverse chronology. It ends with American troops, brandishing a large flag, apparently advancing against their Filipino foes during the war of 1899-1902 that crushed Philippine aspirations for independence at a cost of some 20,000 soldiers and 200,000 civilians on the Philippine side. Actually, though, the scene was shot in New Jersey by Thomas Edison with his newly invented movie camera. Unfortunately, this series reflects the realities of Philippine-American relations probably no better than Edison's fictional re-creation.

Edison's pioneering film certainly did not depict the widespread (and officially ordered) atrocities committed by U.S. troops. Although the U.S. still officially calls it an insurrection, Karnow notes that it was really a war of conquest. But despite this and other bits of barbed truth, *In Our Image* remains essentially a whitewash of some rather ugly realities.

Fast and loose: The programs move along briskly enough. Part One, "Colonial Days," covers the period from 1898, when the islands were acquired as a war prize from Spain, to 1945, when they were won back from Japan. The brutalities of the Philippine-American War are sketched in, but Karnow moves immediately to emphasize at length the influence of American schoolteachers who soon flooded the archipelago teaching English, American history and basic mathematical skills in free schools. His recounting of large historical events—the 1935 U.S. promise of independence in 10 years, the Japanese conquest of

Philippine saga sanitized for your protection

1942, MacArthur's pledge to return and the 1945 U.S. reconquest—is commonplace.

Most telling in this segment are the excerpts from Philippine songs and films of the '30s that illustrate the profound influence of American cultural forms within the colony. ("We're in Manila now," a smooth-faced Filipino bandleader admonishes a woman who objects to

TELEVISION

singing in English in one film. "Our listeners are tired of Filipino songs.")

The second part, "Showcase of Democracy," portrays the country from the eve of independence to Benigno Aquino's assassination as he arrived back in the Philippines from exile in 1983. Karnow notes the continued heavy U.S. control of its former colony in the late '40s and '50s. The Philippine constitution was amended at the last minute, as a condition of American aid to the war-devastated islands, to give American companies "a virtual monopoly in the Philippines."

U.S. military bases were retained, and the U.S. not only financed and directed the fight against the peasant movement Hukbalahap ("the Huks"), but also directed the campaign of a new leader, Ramon Magsaysay (the Philippine president from 1953 to 1957, whose speeches continued to be written for him by his CIA handlers even after his election). Such developments are not presented as particularly negative. It was a time when, Harnow narrates, "the American connection worked," or when, as Joseph Smith, ex-CIA official, puts it, "the Agency was on the side of the angels."

Marcos in Camelot? Next (skipping the years from 1957 to 1965, which receive no mention) comes the saga of Ferdinand and Imelda. Marcos begins promisingly, in this account, and several interviewees compare his first administration to

John F. Kennedy's "Camelot." Increasingly militant anti-American student protests, however, along with Marcos' violent responses, lead to a breakdown of law and order, and Marcos imposes martial law in 1972—at which point, Karnow's interlocutors (including former U.S. Ambassador Henry Byroade) assert, violence and corruption cease and generally things are put "on a much sounder basis." The Marcos' corruption and burgeoning megalomania, though, spell their eventual doom.

Clearly this is history as superficial morality play, lacking analysis

This is history as a superficial morality play.

of real social or economic—or even political—developments (Why did

students target America? What enabled Marcos to wield power for so long?). And this account is skewed toward apology—essentially justifying Marcos when he succeeds and damning him when he fails).

Much the same can be said of the last segment, "People Power," encompassing the downfall of Marcos and the storybook flowering of the martyred Benigno Aquino's widow—a saga too recent to require recapitulation here. The series closes with Cory Aquino's triumphal appearance before the U.S. Congress in September 1986. The relationship of America and the Philippines, Karnow intones at the end, "reflects almost a century of shared experiences—tensions, tragedies, triumphs. So as Filipinos strive to shape their own image, it's bound to be at least in part an American image." One would scarcely think from such an overview that all this sharing involved the domination of one country by the other.

The series even suffers in comparison to Karnow's companion book, *In Our Image: America's Em-*

pire in the Philippines. There is no talk of an American empire in the television narrative—let alone the title. And while the book is no gem of historical or social analysis, it at least brings out some of the realities underlying the two countries' "shared experience." There is the fact, for example, that since the turn of the century American power in the Philippines has been asserted principally through an alliance with a Filipino oligarchy originally formed under the Spanish—an alliance broken by Marcos (an upstart whom the U.S. alone had no difficulty working with) and restored by Aquino, who is thoroughly a member of this class.

It's a fact emphasized by Karnow in print, yet not even whispered in the television series. There is certainly much to criticize in the book, from its conservative conclusions and condescending attitudes toward Filipinos to its fatuous and frequent invocation of American benevolence. But standing next to it, the TV version can only be called essentially dishonest.

John Stevenson is a writer living in Chicago.



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Bille August

Continued from page 24

or American actors.

It took a bit of doing for the non-Spanish-speaking Scandinavian who has never visited Latin America to convince Allende he was the one to do her book justice. She'd already turned down droves of directors.

"I'd always said no," recalls Allende from her home in California. "To put that long, complicated book into a movie is difficult." But August was not discouraged by her brush-off.

Ultimately he flew to San Francisco to woo her with a private screening of *Pelle the Conqueror*. "That changed the whole situation," Allende says. "After 10 minutes I said, he's going to win the Cannes festival. After 20 minutes I said, OK, I don't want to see any more. I know that he will do *The House of the Spirits*."

Allende is allowing him full artistic control of the project. "I think he can do something wonderful, because he can treat it with detachment," Allende says, "with a Scandinavian

touch." I won't even look at the script. I trust him blindly."

A message of love: Allende's novel had made as much of an impression on August as he made on its author, which is why he was so keen to take it on. "After a very few pages I realized that book was so beautiful and so wonderful. It was the biggest experience I'd ever had in my life reading a book."

When two people like August and Allende team up, politics is bound to be an issue. Allende is the niece of the socialist Chilean president Salvador Allende, who died in a military coup. Yet the novelist and the director deny they are using *The House of the Spirits* as a soapbox.

"The story is very much a love story," August says. "The argumentation theme is the reason why people are evil. They're not born evil.... When people get very reactionary, very conservative, it's because something went wrong in their lives. Esteban [the cruel patriarch in the book] is the perfect example. It would be a mistake to leave politics out, but

it's not a political film."

Production starts in August in Argentina, where the director is searching out "a very spectacular location." The cast has not been finalized, and the budget has not been announced. But because the production will be an epic requiring funds far beyond the Danish resources, August has enlisted the Swedish Film Institute, a British producer and—in a surprise move—Warner Brothers.

One thing that hasn't changed is August's fierce commitment to maintain his independence and control over his projects. He is producing *The House of the Spirits* in English to give it the widest possible audience. But he says he is motivated by the desire to convey a specific theme to an often-overlooked public.

"I think that when people walk out of the movie, they will feel love," he says. "In the Third World, people don't read so much. I want to reach them with a love message." ■

Anne Kalosh, a writer living in Miami Beach, recently traveled to Scandinavia.

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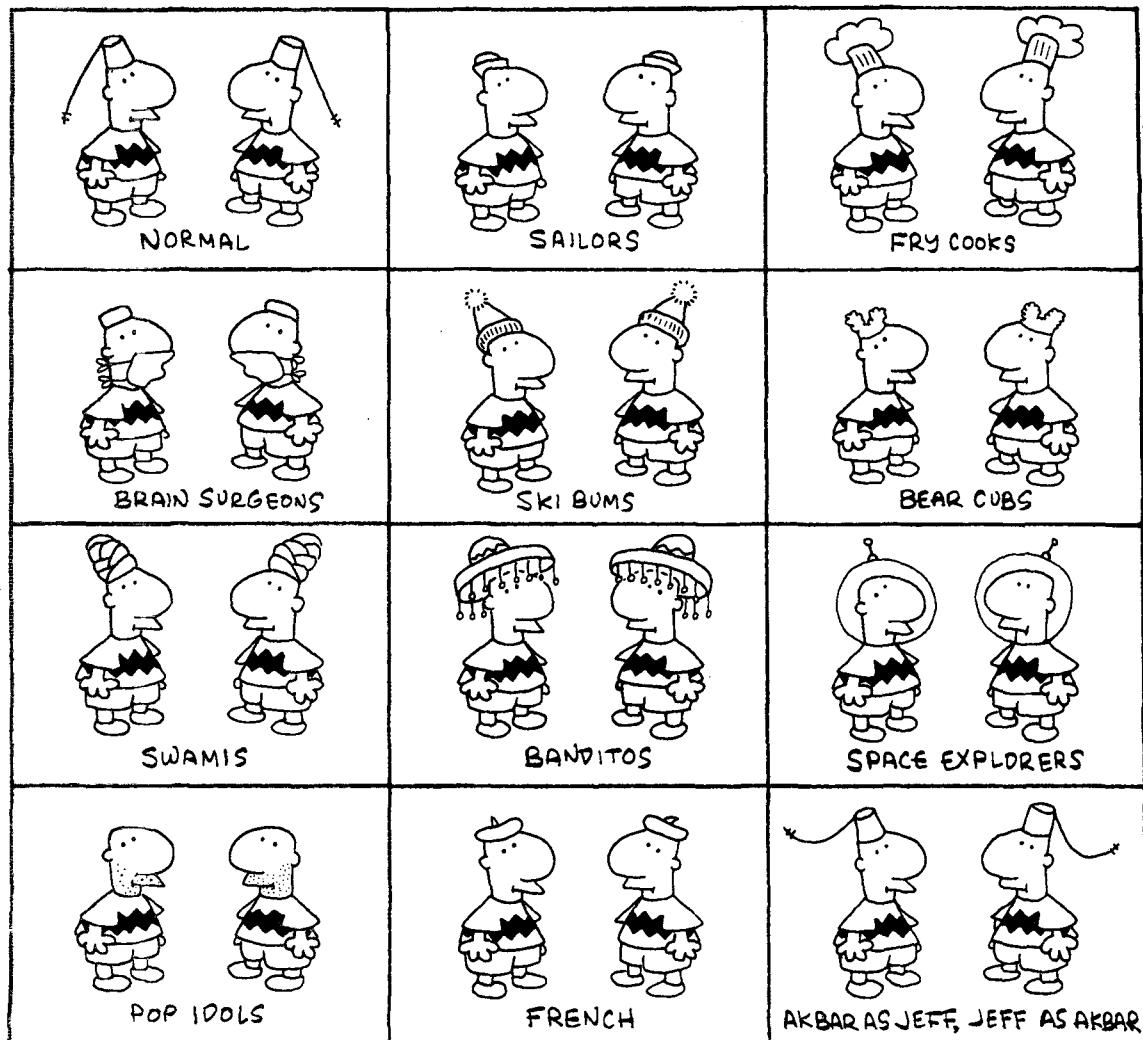
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Hot August's night



By Anne Kalosh

NE OF THE FEW ODDS-ON FAVORITES to win an Oscar at this year's surprise-filled Academy Awards presentation was *Pelle the Conqueror* in the best foreign-language picture category. Danish director Bille August, looking ill at ease in front of the cameras, accepted the prize by saying he wasn't used to all the fuss.

It's not only that he favors jeans to a tuxedo, or that he's more comfortable controlling events from behind the scenes. For August, Denmark's hottest director and a rising international star, the award came from a society he has shunned.

Hollywoodn't: A few years back, *Twist and Shout*, his Danish coming-of-age story, caused a minor sensation and drew invitations to direct in Hollywood—which August turned down.

"I learned about Hollywood," August said recently over hot chocolate at Copenhagen's trendy La Brasserie restaurant. "It's not very creative, because it's run by lawyers. People sitting at the head of production are changing all the time, getting fired."

"Distribution companies must have films every year. It doesn't matter about making the film you want to make. You make the film to make money. If Kim Basinger is very big there, they think of a vehicle for her where the audience will see her breasts." The Scandinavian system, he believes, allows one to think "more in terms of quality."

The Danish government helps fund about 10 films a year. For the epic *Pelle the Conqueror*, which traces the bitter-sweet path of a Swedish father and son who immigrate to Denmark at the turn of the century in search of a better life, financial support was also enlisted from Sweden.

If American tastes favor a commercial diet, how does August account for the success of *Pelle the Conqueror* here? "It's a very emotional film," he says, "and the U.S. is a country full of immigrants, so people can identify very easily with the characters."

Pelle the Conqueror was a hit in Europe, where it was released over a year ago. Scandinavian critics generally analyzed the work in a political context, emphasizing the class struggle implicit in the story.

Spirited followup: August, however, does not confine himself to purely "seri-

ous" works. His latest project is a film version of Isabel Allende's first novel, the fanciful *The House of the Spirits*.

"Film to me is like entertainment," he says. "It is for the big audience ... and I don't want to make small documentaries."

Unlike some motion picture mavericks, August has been embraced by the cinematic establishment. His *Pelle the Conqueror* earned top honors at Cannes last year and a Foreign Press Association Golden Globe award for best foreign film. Max von Sydow, starring as the story's aging farmworker, Lasse, also earned an Oscar nomination for best actor, a rare distinction for a performer in a foreign-language picture.

Pelle is the most recent in a string of prize-winning August projects. Not bad for a 40-year-old director from a tiny land that has been overshadowed by neighboring Sweden's film industry and the larger-than-life Ingmar Bergman.

August brushes off the inevitable comparison. "Ingmar Bergman is his own country," he shrugs. "I'm very pleased to have grown up in a place where film is important."

In fact, the Dane got his start in Bergman's Sweden, studying cinematography and making over a dozen movies for TV and the big screen. His cinematography background, he says, makes him feel "very secure" when writing and directing.

"I'm always interested in expressing myself visually. I'm always thinking in pictures when I'm writing a script. I always think of how it will look."

That cinematographer's eye is apparent in *Pelle the Conqueror*'s sweeping views of the rural landscape of Bornholm, the Danish island where the story is set. August and cinematographer Jorgen Persson carefully captured all the seasons, from spring with its tender buds to autumn's golden fields. Particularly powerful are the winter scenes of the snow-encrusted countryside and the bleak farm manor where Lasse and his son Pelle land jobs as laborers.

August adapted the script for *Pelle the Conqueror* from the first of Martin Andersen Nexø's four-volume series of the same name. Published shortly after the turn of the century, the tale follows the life of Pelle, a poor boy who grows up to become a trade unionist and labor leader. Considered classics in Scandinavia, the "Pelle" books are required reading in many schools. In August's movie, the child actor who plays Pelle was named after the fictional character—owing to his mother's fascination with the books.

Scandinavian control: Only once, for a children's film, has August directed a screenplay that he neither wrote nor adapted. He says he is highly disciplined and allows himself just six months to pen the first draft of a project.

"It's a very special Scandinavian tradition that film directors always do the screenplay themselves," August says. "It gives a reserve of control. During the filming you have to be an expert. You have to know all the answers. If something isn't working for an actor you can change it because you know the story intimately."

If Nexø's saga was difficult to adapt to the big screen, it probably presented fewer problems than Allende's tale of magical realism. Yet true to form, August completed the first draft, writing in Danish, in six months. The movie will be filmed in English, using British

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***Pelle* director Bille August
conquered Tinseltown
without going Hollywood.**